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THE BRANDED HAND

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The Gift of
The Massachusetts
Anti-Slavery
Society.
Rec. Aug. 23,
1847.
49.20

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Jonathan Walker

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TRIAL AND IMPRISONMENT

OF

JONATHAN WALKER,

AT PENSACOLA, FLORIDA,

FOR

AIDING SLAVES TO ESCAPE FROM BONDAGE.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE.

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them. For this is the law and the prophets."

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED AT THE ANTI-SLAVERY OFFICE
25 Cornhill.
1846.

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Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1845, by
JONATHAN WALKER.
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

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PREFACE.

On his return from Florida, after his release, Captain Walker called on me with the manuscript narrative of his trial and imprisonment. In common with very many of the members of the American Anti-Slavery Society, I had long known his character as a man of the strictest veracity and the highest conscientiousness; and his narrative seemed to me to cast so strong a light upon the religious, the moral, and the political condition of the United States, from the practical workings of their great organic law—the constitution—down to the minutest of the territorial usages and enactments which result from that law; and to exhibit in so clear a view the contrast between the principles and ideas which at present govern the public mind, and those which are beginning to struggle for the mastery, that I could not but warmly urge this publication.

There are those who doubt whether the North is as guilty as the South with respect to slavery; whether the system is degrading to the slave and disgraceful to the master; whether the slave is cruelly treated; whether the system is injurious to the reputation of this country, a reproach to its Christianity, and ruinous to the character of its people.

There are also those who, while they condemn slavery, at the same time assert that its extinction may be best promoted by studied silence, and by a quiet waiting for the gradual operations of a moral and religious system which declares that it is not in its nature sinful, and justifies it from the Scriptures; and of a political and governmental system which is a solemn guaranty in its favor.

There are those, too, who believe the abolitionists to be

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instigated by a bitter, unkind, fanatical and insurrectionary spirit; hostile to law and order, sectional in their views, and possessed by one idea.

And there are others, who, honoring the holy cause, and respecting the disinterestedness of abolitionists, yet justify themselves in standing aloof from the movement, under the idea of being better able to befriend the cause by refusing to be numbered among its adherents, and suffering themselves to be counted in the ranks of the opponents.

It was for the sake of all these classes that I most earnestly urged Captain Walker to give to the public, whose great majority they compose, the manuscript which he had prepared for the satisfaction of his friends.

When they see, in its unstudied pages, the good, forgiving, self-denying spirit of the Christian, the indomitable determination of the Freeman, and the severe devotedness of the Puritan, all uniting in an unconscious exhibition of the uncompromising Abolitionist, I cannot but hope that their hearts will be touched by the excellence of the example.

It is to be lamented that many interesting and illustrative incidents must be suppressed, out of regard to the safety of individuals, whose liberties and lives their publication would endanger; yet what could, better than such a fact, illustrate the condition of slaves and freemen in the United States of North America; or better plead the cause of those few of the inhabitants who are pronounced by the rest to be over zealous, because they have been the first to perceive what all will soon be obliged to acknowledge,—that the liberties of our land are gone? It was a deep observation of facts that led Montesquieu to say, "A republic may lose its liberties in a day, and not find it out for a century." The day that sunk ours, was that of the adoption of the Federal Constitution—the day when we perpetrated, as a nation, an eternal wrong for the sake of guilty prosperity and peace. But it now begins to be very plainly discerned, that between slavery and freedom there can be no covenant. The futile hope of

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our fathers, in attempting such a one, was peace;—after the lapse of sixty years, their descendants hear from that guilty past,

"Ancestral voices, prophesying WAR!"

The narrative of Frederick Douglass gives a picture of the condition of a slave in the land that their folly and their fear betrayed. That of Jonathan Walker shows the condition of the freeman whose lot is cast in the same land, little more than half a century only after the perpetration of that treason to humanity.

The most ignominious tortures are now the lot of him who, in the United States of America, determines to be truly a freeman, nor lose his own liberties with the sinking ones of the republic; of him whose liberty it is to choose his part with the enslaved, and not with the slaveholder.

It may but prove, in the language of those old puritans whose blood yet floods a Massachusetts heart so strongly, "a greater liberty to suffer, a more freedom to die." Yet whatever be the result, God grant, throughout the land, a continual outpouring of that free, devoted spirit to us and to our children! a spirit which, by the might of its good will, by the strength of its sense of duty, shall overcome tyranny, prejudice and cruelty; bigotry, avarice and knavery; and the whole array of sins of which slavery is at once the cause and the effect.

This is a painful tale for an American to read, and think, meanwhile, that it is circulating through the civilized world; but, if worthy of the name, he will find comfort in the thought that it is confirming the abolitionist and confuting the slave-holder, showing an example to both of the dutiful obedience to right, which is mighty to save a nation from utter reproach and destruction.

It will be a painful tale for all, to whom the carefully concealed features and inevitable consequences of the slave-system have never before been exhibited. Such are to be

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found at the South as well as at the North; and both will do well, in the intensity of their pain and disgust, to remember the words of GARRISON:

"Let us not sentimentally shrink from such knowledge; we *will* know what we have to do, that we may more surely do it. We go forth to take off chains; and there is need that our virtue should be robust."

Very consoling is the reflection that this uprising of the heart against wrong is not a sectional one, but felt at the south as well as at the north, by men of all parties and of all sects.

Very exalting is the idea that the virtual slaveholder of the north, not merely reproaching the planter, the overseer and the driver, has begun the work of self-sacrificing reform with his own heart, by refusing all political and ecclesiastical participation in their deed. The abolition of slavery is sure, since these most guilty and efficient slaveholders begin to make abolitionism not only an ethical statement, but a Christian life.

MARIA WESTON CHAPMAN.

Boston, August, 1845.

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TRIAL AND IMPRISONMENT

OF

JONATHAN WALKER.

CHAPTER I.

HAVING been arraigned before the public by providential circumstances of a somewhat unusual nature, and having been the subject of much remark and ridicule; passing "through evil report and good report," throughout the United States, and having received tokens of sympathy from abroad in consequence of the treatment I received from the tribunals of my own country for an attempted act of kindness towards some of the down-trodden of my own countrymen; and confident that but a scanty and imperfect knowledge of the case has found its way to the people, who have a right to know the real facts; it appears to be a matter of duty to them and the cause for which I have suffered, that I should relate the substance of the whole transaction as it actually occurred. This I have endeavored to do with much carefulness in avoiding all false coloring or deviation from the simple truth.

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Having never been favored with an education, and laboring under the disadvantage of writing hastily, on my passage home, as I found opportunity, the narrative will not be so attractive as it otherwise might be. But such readers as desire a simple ungarnished statement of the case, will, I hope, find their minds led by it to a subject of the first consideration to every American citizen.

I look upon the southern States as the most favored part of my country, which nature seems to have done and to be doing much more for, than for the northern States. Their soft and genial climate, their rich and luxuriant soil, their long and uniform summers, their short and mild winters, their beautiful timber forests and great water-privileges, all far exceed those of New England, in my opinion; and I am fully under the impression that I could support my family at the south for less than half the labor and exertions that I can at the north. Neither are the customs of the people there more repugnant to my feelings than the customs of the northern people generally, with the exception of what belongs to the system of slavery. I have long since cast into oblivion all sectional and hostile feelings toward my fellow-men. I have no ill-will to the slave-holders, or the advocates of slavery; but I pity them for their awful depravity in regarding as property those who are, by the rule of right and the laws of God, entitled to the same privileges and benefits as themselves. It is the system of slavery, that sheds mildew upon the fair prospects of our country —blasting its social, political, moral, and religious prosperity—which I do unhesitatingly contend against;

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since the master's true interest and rights do not suffer in consequence of his slaves becoming free laborers; for they cannot, I say it emphatically, be his property, nor can his rights consist in other people's wrongs.

I have spent a good deal of time in the southern States, and have closely and carefully observed the mode and operation of the slave system in several of them; and have lived five to six years with my family in Pensacola, Florida; being known by the people generally to be hostile to the system of slavery. Twice, while living there, I was called upon by different persons,—the chief executive officers or mayors for the time being,—in consequence of the reports in circulation that I was on good terms with the colored people; and it was intimated that there was danger in regard to my peace and safety, for should the people be excited in consequence of my discountenance of some of their rules and customs respecting the association of white with colored men, it would be out of their power to shield me from *violence*.

CHAPTER II.

Late in the fall of 1843, I left my home in Harwich, Massachusetts, and took passage on board of a vessel bound for Mobile, where I spent the winter and spring —mostly in working at the ship-wright business, which is my trade.

I left Mobile on the 2d June, 1844, for Pensacola,

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in a boat belonging to myself; chiefly for the purpose of raising a part of the wreck of a vessel sunk near the latter place, for the sake of getting the copper that was attached to it. I arrived on the 4th, made some examination and some inquiry about the wreck, and was informed that it was claimed by a citizen of the place. Although it had been sunk there more than thirty years, no effort had been made to raise it. I called on the person who claimed it, but we could not agree on terms. I passed up the bay thirty or forty miles, to see an old friend or two, stayed a few days, and returned to Pensacola again. Soon after, I had an interview with three or four persons that were disposed to leave the place. I gave them to understand that if they chose to go to the Bahama Islands in my boat, I would share the risk with them. Preparations were made, and on the evening of the 22d, seven men came on board the boat, and we left the place, went out of the harbor, and followed in the direction of the coast to the eastward. We had for several days strong head winds, with frequent squalls and rain. I had for two days been somewhat unwell, having been much exposed to the violence of the sun, and had been what is called sun-struck, and was now exposed to the sudden changing elements night and day in an open boat. On the 26th, we arrived at St. Andre's harbor, where we stopped part of the day, dried our clothing, cooked some provisions, recruited the water-barrel, and I took an emetic. In the evening we left, and the next day run up St. Joseph's Bay, with the intention of taking the boat across into St. George's Sound, to avoid going round Cape

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St. Blass; but we found the distance too great; abandoned the idea, and passed out of the bay again and went round the cape. On the 28–9th, went through St. George's Sound, stopping a few hours at St. George's Island to cook a little, and recruit our water. We passed Apalacha Bay, following somewhat the direction of the coast, and on the 1st of July were in the vicinity of Cedar Keys.* Up to this time my sickness had still increased, and I was so unwell as to be obliged to leave the management of the boat pretty much entirely to those that were with me, for by spells I was somewhat delirious. I remember looking at the red horizon in the west, soon after sun-down, as I thought for the last time in this world, not expecting to behold that glorious luminary shedding its scorching rays on me more.

While using the remaining faculties which I possessed, in aid of the slave's escape from his master, the reader may be anxious to know the state of my mind at that time, when in prospect of speedy dissolution, on the subject of slavery; or, more properly, of my anti-slavery feeling. Among other things, my mind was occupied on that subject also, and I calmly and deliberately thought it over; and, as on other occasions, came to the conclusion that slavery was evil and only evil, and that continually; and that any mode or process of emancipation, short of blood-shed or the sacrifice of principle, would not be in violation

*From the shore of the west and south part of the peninsula of Florida, shoal ground extends to a considerable distance, on which are numerous small islands denominated Keys, each having its own separate name.

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of right or duty, but the contrary; and therefore calculated to secure the approbation of that great "Judge of all the earth, who doeth right," and before whose presence I soon expected to appear.

After passing this night, I scarcely know how, the next morning I found myself more comfortable, and felt some relief. In a day or two after, (for I was now unable to keep the run of time,) we landed on one of St. Martin's Keys, and cooked provisions, but could get no water. For several days nature and my disease seemed to be about on a balance, and it was doubtful which would rule the day; I took another emetic, made free use of cayenne pepper and bitters, which appeared to have a good effect, and in a few days my face was nearly covered with sores, and my whole system, which had been so much oppressed that I could with difficulty respire, felt much relieved. But my strength and flesh were nearly gone, and the system so much reduced, that it is a wonder to me how, after undergoing so much privation, exposure, and the treatment that followed, I was enabled to recover at all.

We continued down the coast, landing several times in search of water, without being able to get any, but being confident that we should find some at Cape Florida, where we intended to stop before crossing the gulf. But fortunately, or unfortunately, which, I cannot tell, at day-break on the morning of July the 8th, we saw two sloops* within a short

* The sloops were wrecking vessels of eighty or ninety tons, manned with fifteen or twenty men each, and sailed very fast. They are employed for the sake of saving or getting what they can from vessels wrecked on the coast. They hailed from Key West.

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distance, standing towards us. In a few moments they came within hail, and inquired, "Where are you from, and where are you bound?" I answered, "From St. Joseph's, bound to Cape Florida."* The captain of one of the sloops said, "I am going that way, and will give you a tow;" at the same time he ran alongside of the boat and made a rope fast to it, and invited us on board the sloop. The men were going on board, when I advised them to stay in the boat. Four of them had stepped on board, but one immediately returned. The others were not allowed to. The sloop directly reversed her course and run back where she had come from, and anchored. I requested the captain to allow the men to return in the boat; he made no reply, but took his boat and went on board of the other sloop, which had followed him back to the anchorage. Soon after he returned and requested me to come on board the vessel. I, being then exposed to the violent heat of the sun, thought it prudent to comply, confident that we should be detained at all events. While on board I was treated with civility, and permitted to pass the time in the cabin or on deck, as I chose for my convenience or comfort. We were then forty or fifty miles from Cape Florida, and if we had not been detained, would have got there before night, and been ready to cross

*The reader has seen that St. Joseph's was the last port we left, and we intended to call at Cape Florida. This has been used to make it appear that I resorted to falsehood, because we had started from Pensacola, and were bound, ultimately, to Nassau, New Providence.

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the gulf the next morning. But our voyage was up, and we had other prospects now before us.

We had now been fourteen days on our passage, and had sailed and rowed more than seven hundred miles; but for the last eight or ten days the weather had proved more uniform and mild, and the winds favorable but light. Had I been well, it is probable we should not have been more than ten or twelve days to this place, and saved much distance by running more direct courses. If we had been one hour sooner or later in passing this place, we should not have come in contact with those vessels. Since leaving St. Martin's Keys, whenever we landed, we were harassed with swarms of mosquitoes, each anxious to have his bill entered without examination or delay. The sloop lay at anchor until night, then got under way and run for Key West, with the boat in tow, where she arrived the next day afternoon.

CHAPTER III.

I was now taken before a magistrate, borne by two men, not being able to walk alone. There I was required to give bail in the sum of one thousand dollars for my appearance at the next November court; but being unable to do so, I was committed to jail, or rather to the house in which the constable lived. I was placed in a small room on the second floor, with three other prisoners, but slept in the room with the constable and family; the prisoners eat at the same table the family

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did, after they had eaten. I was handcuffed one night, but was permitted to use my hands the rest of the time while there, in fighting mosquitoes, which were very annoying at all times.

Most of my things which I had in the boat were brought from the vessel by the sheriff, and placed in charge of the constable, with the exception of a trunk and bundle of clothing which I was allowed to retain for my own use. I begged to be allowed to retain a small trunk of botanic medicine which I had, but was refused. After remaining at this place three days, it was said there was much excitement in the village, and I was escorted by the constable, sheriff, esquire, and district attorney, to the soldiers' barracks, and confined in a room with another prisoner, where I stayed but one night, and the next day was put on board the steamboat General Taylor, in the United States' employ, to be taken to Pensacola. I requested that my effects, which were in charge of the constable, might be taken with me, but it was not complied with; and I have not been able to learn anything from them since, except that they were sold. I subsequently wrote twice to the sheriff, but received no answer. They were of no great value, but to one in my circumstances, it was a good deal. I had an excellent spy-glass, for which I paid twenty dollars, and a chest of carpenter's tools, and several other articles, besides some things that the sheriff said he could not find on board of the sloop. My boat and the seven men were put on board of another sloop, (named the Reform,) and sent to Pensacola previous to my leaving Key West.

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I was placed down the hold of the steamboat, on the ceiling, where it was very filthy, and put in double irons, (both hands and feet,) where I was kept for six days, with the exception of being permitted to come on deck a few hours in a day, and sit or lie upon the hatches. The food given me was salt beef, pork, and navy-bread, with a slight exception. We left Key West on the 13th, went to Tampa Bay, took in some wood, and on the night of the 18th arrived at Pensacola navy-yard. The next day I was conducted to Pensacola by the deputy-marshal in a small boat, and in a rain storm, (distance eight miles.) On landing at the wharf, there was a large collection of people, who appeared to be very talkative, and some were noisy; but no violence was attempted. By summoning all the strength I could muster, I succeeded in walking to the court-house. The court was already convened, whether solely on my account or not, I do not know. My trunk and bundle were searched, but nothing taken therefrom. I was required to give bail in the sum of ten thousand dollars, or be committed to prison to await my trial whenever it should take place: with me there was no alternative but to comply with the latter. I attempted to walk to the jail in company with the marshal and constable, but gave out by the way, and was carried there in a cart, placed in a room by myself, and secured to a ring-bolt by a large size log-chain, and a shackle of round iron, weighing about five pounds, round the ankle. The marshal searched my person, found on me about fifteen dollars in money, which he took, but afterwards gave me again. The floor

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was my bed, seat, and table; and it was nearly a month before I could procure anything to lie upon, other than a few clothes which I had with me. But I finally succeeded in getting a chair, small table, and some straw, of which I made a pallet on the floor, and it served for my bed during my imprisonment.

Although the rage of my disease had much abated, I was still kept low, and suffered from alternate chills and fever, attended with much pain in the head and distress at the stomach; but I gradually gained strength, and by eating a large quantity of red-peppers got rid of the chills, and in about three months was nearly restored to health again.

In three or four days after I had arrived in Pensacola, the sloop Reform arrived with the other men and my boat. Soon after, Robert C. Caldwell called to see me, and appeared very friendly, saying that he did not intend to punish his servants for going away with me; and intimated that the custom-house and the wreckers both had claims on the boat, and it was very doubtful whether I should be able to realize anything for her; and as he had lost a good deal by his servants' going away with me, if I would consent for him to have the boat, he would try to compromise with the claimants, and might get something for it. Placing some confidence in what he said, and thinking that a refusal might excite a spirit of revenge, and that if disposed, he could make my situation more desperate than it was already, and being of the opinion that I should not be able to realize anything from it if I refused him, I consented for him to get what he could from it; and so put an end to what I had there in the

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shape of property. I should be no further harassed on that point.

The jail is a brick building of two stories, about eighteen by thirty-six feet, having upon each floor two rooms, the lower part for the occupation of the prisoners, and the upper part for the jailer's family. The rooms for the prisoners are fifteen to sixteen feet square, with double doors, and two small grated windows from six to eight feet from the lower floor. Overhead is a single board floor, which but little obstructs the noise of the upper part from being distinctly heard below, and *vice versa*.

About twenty feet from the jail, and fronting the windows, was a wooden building denominated the kitchen. Its door having previously taken refuge in the fire, and the wooden windows shutting only as the wind blew them to, I had a pretty fair view of what was transacted there from the only window which I could look out of, and from which I was often compelled to turn away, for the scene was too disgusting to look upon. There was scolding and cowhiding dealt out without measure, and the filthiness far exceeded anything I ever saw before connected with cooking. The place was a common resort for all the lank and starving domestics about the premises, seeking to pacify their hungry rage where the cook performed; and one might truly say that

> The cook and the hens for the kitchen went snacks,
> With two horses, three dogs, and five cats;

for there the cook, the poultry, and the horse might be seen helping themselves from the same meal barrel, and

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the dogs cleaning the cooking utensils, and sometimes taking a favorite bit from the market-basket, before its contents had been otherwise disposed of. The board on which the food was prepared for cooking, was common to the tread of the cats and the poultry. The cook was a slave woman, and had a small straight-haired child, whose lungs were the strongest of any human being I ever saw of its size, and it made the freest use of them. For hours and hours of each day, for months, my ears rang with its tormenting screams, for it could not be called crying. And to make the matter still worse, there were three more small children of the family, all, alas! having the same habits; and no reasonable means or effort appeared to be put forth to reduce their noise. The young band were allowed to continue or to cease their music at their pleasure.

For many years I have been in the habit of being much among children, and am passionately fond of them, and delight to mingle in their company and sports; and I well knew that children will cry, and to stop them entirely, could only be done by stopping their breath. But there is a vast difference between crying naturally and occasionally, and screaming at the top of one's voice with rage and passion, trying at each breath to exceed the previous note, for hours together. I do not wish to exaggerate, but, to speak within bounds, I honestly think that for the first three months I was there, crying would occupy six hours per day; and frequently two or three would be under way at a time.

The reader may imagine me worn down by expo-

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sure and disease almost to a skeleton; and that delicate organ, the brain, which is the seat of the nerves, having been powerfully affected by violent action upon it, was now rendered much more susceptible to the least impression. My stomach, from weakness and loss of digestive powers, rejected and loathed most of the common food of life; and, while the system was harassed with violent chills and fever, I was chained to the sleepers of a solitary cell, rolling from side to side, and shifting from one position to another on the floor to relieve my aching bones, which were covered with little more than the skin wrapped over them. Let the reader imagine him or herself in this situation, and it will be clearly seen that these, with other things of a kindred nature, must have had a very sensible effect to aggravate the misery and sufferings of imprisonment.

One of my first objects after I was incarcerated, was to procure such nourishment as would not quarrel with nature, and this I found rather difficult at first; a part of the jail feed I could not relish, and if I attempted to eat it, it would sicken and distress me. The bread, a dish of soup once a day, and sometimes a little fish, was all that I could eat of my rations, and it was difficult to get any one to bring me anything for two or three weeks. But I finally succeeded in getting a Dane, who kept a grocery, to let his boy bring me such things as I needed, and by this means I obtained much relief and accommodation throughout my confinement; and both the father and his little son, who was very attentive to my wants, are entitled to my grateful and warmest thanks.

For several months my feet and legs were much

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swelled, and the first irons I had on were partly buried in the flesh, but after some weeks' entreaty they were taken off and replaced by others larger. On the 4th September I was moved to the adjoining room; and here were two objects which attracted my attention. On one side of the room, much of the floor was stained with the blood of a slave, who had three days before committed suicide by cutting open his belly and throat with a razor; he had been committed that morning, charged with stealing, but it was subsequently ascertained that the article which he was accused of stealing had only been removed by some other person to another place, and nothing had the appearance of dishonesty in the case. But life had gone, and neither innocence nor skill could restore it. I have no doubt but his miserable condition as a slave to a severe master, and the expectation of undergoing severe punishment for the alleged offence, was the cause of his putting an end to his degraded existence. This was one of the seven slaves whom I had vainly endeavored to save from bondage, and on whose account I was now imprisoned.

The other object was the chain to which I was attached, it being the same which I had noticed fastened to the leg of Isaac, a slave man under sentence of death, nearly three years previous. The day before he was to be executed, I called to see him. He had undergone three trials, charged with committing a rape upon a woman of doubtful character. The two first juries did not agree, but the third rendered a verdict of guilty, and consequently he was sentenced to be hung the day following my visit. He still per-

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sisted in his innocence, forgiving his accusers, and appeared much resigned to his expected fate. His mind appeared calm, and he manifested confidence in the mercy of God through his Son. A petition, numerously signed, had been forwarded to the governor of the territory, but as yet no intelligence had arrived. I had conversed with the prisoner a few moments, and we had knelt together in supplication, in His name who is able to take away the sting of death and smooth its rough passage, by his own blood, rendering it safe to all who truly and faithfully trust in Him for divine aid. We had scarcely risen, when the marshal entered, and read a letter from the governor containing the full pardon of the condemned man, and ordered his irons to be taken off, and delivered him up to his master; and I saw him no more. But while I am writing this, I can see and feel the same chain attached to my leg. But few, if any, believed Isaac to be guilty of the charge against him, but that the prosecution was raised, on pecuniary considerations, out of revenge towards his master. And what is my crime? what have I done? I have attempted to assist a few of my fellow-beings to escape from bondage, to which they were subjected for no cause over which they or their ancestors had any control; but because they were of the weaker party, and had not the power to assert their rights among men.

From about the year 1822, I began to go amongst slavery, and from that time, on all occasions which presented, I tried to inform myself of its mode of operation, and have, in several of the slave states, scrutinized it in the parlor and in the kitchen, in the

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cottage and in the field, in the city and in the country; and have long since made up my mind that it ranked with the highest wrongs and crimes that ever were invented by the enemy of man, and ingeniously contrived to destroy the social and kind feelings existing between man and man, and the virtue and morals of both the master and the slave; subjecting one to the deepest degradation and misery, and the other to dissipation, and contempt of the laws and government of God. It is a family, community, political, and national poison;—obstructing the circulation of friendly and Christian sympathy, and giving vent to the worst passions and most debasing and corroding feelings that human nature can experience.

CHAPTER IV.

In addition to what has been already said respecting the jail, and what was transacted there, I will make a short extract from a journal I kept while there, and in so doing, shall have to be somewhat personal—which I should be glad to avoid if I could do justice to the subject; but shall be careful to avoid everything which is not strictly true, and void of false coloring; and if some individuals find their names here brought in juxtaposition with some improper transactions, they will have no occasion to charge me with falsehood or malignity. I had scarcely been secured in my cage like some rabid, dangerous animal, before I found I

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had to encounter a species of torment which I had not counted on, in the terrible amount of noise from the domestics about the premises; for I was continually afflicted with a severe headache, and now it was brought in contact with circumstances directly calculated to increase it.

The family consisted of F. T. the jailer—L. T. his wife, and six children; a mulatto woman and her child, five or six months old. Of course the work about the yard and kitchen devolved on the slave woman, who, by the bye, was not without her faults. She had been brought up in the family under the lash, as the only stimulant, which, as a natural consequence, had instilled the most bitter hatred and carelessness, with other kindred qualifications.

July 19. When I was committed, there was one slave man in the adjoining room, for what I know not.

22. L. T. whipped the cook.*

24. " " " " "

25. I wrote to Benj. D. Wright, counsellor at law, requesting an interview. L. T. whipped the cook twice.

28. Four of the slaves who had left with me were brought here and put in the adjoining room. L. T. whipped the cook.

29. My health a little improved; could sit up half the day. Wrote to my wife.

Aug. 1. L. T. whipped the cook.

4. L. T. " " "

* Whenever the cook was whipped, it was done, with a few exceptions, with a raw-hide switch, about three feet in length, generally from twenty to fifty strokes at a time.

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5. The four fugitive slaves in the adjoining room whipped fifty blows each, with a paddle.

8. Were taken out; with much difficulty could walk, being very sore. Cook whipped twice, once by L. T. and once by F. T.

12. A fugitive slave man caught and committed. L. T. whipped the cook.

14. L. T. whipped the cook.

17. " " " " four times. Mistress dreadfully cross.

19. L. T. whipped the cook.

21. " " " " twice.

22. The slave man committed on the 12th, taken out and sent to Alabama.

28. L. T. whipped the cook; children got some too; lots of scolding dealt out, in both English and French. Slave woman committed; had been brought from New Orleans by mistake on board steamboat.

30. L. T. whipped the cook. L. T. confined; brought forth a fine boy.

31. The slave woman, put in the 28th, was taken out and sent back.

Sept. 1. A slave man was committed on suspicion of larceny; he committed suicide same day by cutting his throat and belly open, and lived but two or three hours after.

2. I received a letter from my wife, parent and children, and another from J. P. Nickerson, of Harwich; also one from S. Underwood and E. Nickerson, Jr.

3. Received $25 cash, from an old shipmate, by remittance from New York.

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4. I was shifted to the adjoining room; received a letter from B. D. Wright, counsellor at law, in answer to a note I sent him the 25th July.

6. Wrote to my wife, S. Underwood, and E. Nickerson, Jr. A white man committed; had difficulty with his wife.

9. Let out again. We have had quite still times since the 30th of August, but scolding revives again.

11. A slave man brought to jail—whipped twenty blows with a paddle, and sent back.

If the reader is not acquainted with paddle-whipping, he may form some idea of it from the following description.

The paddles which I have seen, are about twenty inches in length, made of pitch-pine board, from an inch to an inch and a quarter thick, and seven or eight inches of one end is three and a half or four inches wide, having from ten to fifteen holes through it the size of a large nail gimblet, and the other part is made round for the handle. The unfortunate subjects who are to feel the effects of this inhuman drubbing, are first tied, his or her wrists together, then made to sit down on the floor or ground, and put the knees through between the arms, then a stick or broom-handle is inserted through the angle of the legs, directly under the knees and over the arms, which confines them in a doubled and helpless condition. Previous to this arrangement, the victims are made naked from the waist down. The operator now takes hold with one hand of one end of the stick which has been inserted to confine the legs and arms together, and cants them on one side, and in the other hand holds

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the before mentioned paddle, which he applies to the backside of his helpless fellow-creature; stopping at short intervals to allow the sufferer to answer such questions as are asked, or make such promises as it is thought best to extort; and to give the numbness which has been excited by repeated blows, time to subside, which renders the next blows more acute and painful. After a requisite number of blows with the paddle are given, which is generally from ten to fifty, as the master or mistress may dictate, the raw-hide switch is next applied to the bruised and blistered parts, with as many or more blows laid on; after which the sufferer is loosed and suffered to get over it the best way they can. Not only men but women are subject to the same mode of punishment. There is no precise rule to be observed in regard to punishment, but the masters or mistresses are the sole judges as to method and quantity; and whenever the paddle is brought in requisition, it means that the raw-hide (more commonly called cow-hide) is not equal to the offence.

The reader will pardon me for this digression, while I return to the memorandum again.

Sept. 12. A U. S. seaman committed for not being down to the boat in time to go on board.

13. He was taken out and sent on board steamer Union. Cook whipped severely by L. T.'s brother, at her request.

15. A white man from the navy-yard committed; he had come to the city without permission.

16. He was taken out and sent back. Received a letter from J. P. Nickerson, Esq., of Harwich.

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17. I wrote to the same.

18. A white man committed for being noisy in the streets.

20. He was let out again, and another committed for being too drunk to take care of himself.

23. I wrote to the sheriff at Key West.

24. L. T. whipped cook.

25. A large fire in the city. A number of houses burnt. A white man committed on suspicion of setting the fire. He was examined and discharged. Another white man committed, charged with larceny.

26. He was examined and discharged. A slave man committed, charged with attempting to steal fruit. He was whipped four blows with a paddle, and twenty-four with the cow-hide, and let out. A white man committed, charged with larceny.

27. The white man committed on the 20th, discharged. Tremendous scolding about this time.

29. Slave man committed; did not stay at home enough on the Sabbath to do chores; next morning let out. The noisy white man, mentioned the 18th, committed again for like offence.

Oct. 1. L. T. whipped the cook; children cry by wholesale.

2. L. T. whipped the cook. A slave man committed for debt.

3. Two sailors from brig Wetomka committed; they were intoxicated, and quarrelled. Three sailors committed, who had taken French leave from U. S. steamer Union. The whole number now confined in the adjoining room is seven.

4. The slave man, put in on the 29th, discharged.

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A sailor belonging to U. S. vessel Vandalia, committed, and taken out the same day.

7. Three men, attached to the U. S. steamer, taken out and sent on board.

8. L. T. whipped the cook severely, with both ends of the cow-hide.

9. A white man committed on suspicion of participating in murder. Three seamen from the U. S. steamer General Taylor, committed for having some difficulty with the clerk on shore.

10. Two of them taken out and sent on board. The two seamen from brig Wetomka, committed on the 3d, were let out.

11. The white man committed the 9th, on suspicion, discharged.

14. The other man, (the boatswain,) belonging to the U. S. steamer General Taylor, let out. He went on board, and made me a present of a pair of blankets. One white man in the adjoining room and myself are the only remaining prisoners.

15. L. T.'s mother whipped the cook.

17. A sailor, a deserter from the U. S. service, caught and committed.

19. L. T. whipped the cook.

20. The other prisoner discharged.

25. Rather squally overhead and about the kitchen. L. T. whipped the cook twice, and another servant once; the children get some scolding dealt out unsparingly.

27. A white man committed for fighting.

28. Discharged. At night the prisoner in the adjoining room broke out and went off.

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Nov. 3. L. T. whipped the cook severely with a broomstick; scolds tremendously; gives unlimited scope to passion, and tapers off by crying herself.

5. White man committed for quarrelling with his wife.

7. Received a letter from A. B. Merrill, of Boston, counsellor at law. L. T. whipped the cook.

9. A slave man committed for leaving wood at the wrong place.

10. The white man, committed on the 5th, discharged. Received a visit from the district attorney, Walker Anderson.

11. The slave man, committed on the 7th, discharged, and a free colored woman put in for allowing the slave man to put wood in her yard. I was taken to court for trial; had it put off till the 14th; remanded again.

12. The colored woman, committed yesterday, discharged, and another committed for attempting to defend herself when about to be flogged by a naval officer, but discharged same day.

14. I was again conducted to court; tried; jury rendered a verdict of guilty on four indictments, viz., aiding and inducing two slaves to run away, and stealing two others.

15. F. T. whipped the cook.

16. I was again taken to court, sentenced, placed in the pillory one hour, pelted with rotten eggs, branded in the right hand, and remanded to prison again; the sheriff called soon after and served three writs upon me for trespass and damage, to the amount of $106,000; I was not put in irons as before. Received a visit and

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some money from a naval officer, who had witnessed the acts of attempted degradation which I had undergone, and expressed his sympathy in my behalf.

19. Slave man committed for being out too late.

20. Was flogged twenty-four blows with paddle and discharged. Received a letter from A. Chase; also one from J. P. Nicholson, Esq. of South Harwich.

CHAPTER V.

The following are the particulars of my trial. On the 11th Nov., between 10 and 11, A. M., I was taken from prison, conducted to the court-house, and placed in the prisoner's box, and was asked by the judge if I had counsel. I replied that I had not, and that my means were too limited to provide counsel; but that I was daily expecting advice from friends in regard to that point; and I requested that my trial might be put off a few days. The judge informed me that if I was not able to provide counsel for myself, he would furnish me with counsel, and that I could have any one from the bar that I chose, to defend me, (there being three, besides the prosecuting attorney.) I said, that I would be glad to have my trial deferred a few days; and that if I was not then provided with counsel, I would avail myself of his honor's proffer. So the trial was postponed until the 14th, and I was again placed in jail. Soon after 10, A. M., on the 14th, I was again conducted to court, and, not having any more information from my friends, chose Benjamin D. Wright, a member of the bar, to defend me.

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The district attorney, who was the prosecuting officer, presented four indictments against me, which were as follows—omitting the forms of the three last, being the same, and beginning at 1844 :

[1st.]

In the Superior Court of Escambia County, in the District of West Florida, November Term, 1844.

Territory of Florida,

Escambia County, to wit :

The Grand Jurors of and for the Territory of Florida, summoned and sworn to inquire in and for the body of the County of Escambia, upon their oaths present that Jonathan Walker, late of the County of Escambia, laborer, on the first day of July, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and forty-four, with force and arms, in the county aforesaid, one negro man slave, named Silas Scott, of the value of six hundred dollars, of the goods and chattels of one Robert C. Caldwell, then and there being found, feloniously and unlawfully did aid and assist to run away, thereby wilfully causing a loss of labor of the said slave to the said Robert C. Caldwell, against the dignity of the Territory of Florida, and against the form of the statute in such case made and provided.

WALKER ANDERSON,

U. S. Attorney for West Florida, and Prosecuting Officer for the Territory of Florida.

[2nd.]

—— In the county aforesaid, one negro man slave, known by the name of Anthony Catlett, of the value of six hundred dollars, of the goods and chattels of one Byrd C. Willis, then and there being found, feloni-

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ously, unlawfully, and with force and arms, did steal, take, and carry away, against the peace and dignity of the Territory of Florida, and against the form of the statute in such case made and provided.

WALKER ANDERSON,
U. S. Attorney, &c.

[3rd.]

——With force and arms, in the county aforesaid, forcibly, wilfully, and unlawfully did steal and carry away a certain negro slave, named Moses Johnson, of the goods and chattels of one Robert C. Caldwell, then and there being found, of the value of six hundred dollars, against the peace and dignity of the Territory of Florida, and the form of the statute in such case made and provided.

WALKER ANDERSON,
U. S. Attorney, &c.

[4th.]

——With force and arms, in the county aforesaid, one negro man slave, named Charles Johnson, of the value of six hundred dollars, of the goods and chattels of one George Willis, then and there being found, feloniously and unlawfully did entice to run away, thereby wilfully causing the loss of the labor of the said slave to the said George Willis; to the great damage of the said Willis, against the peace and the dignity of the Territory of Florida, and against the form of the statute in such case made and provided.

WALKER ANDERSON,
U. S. Attorney, &c.

My counsel objected to four indictments being

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arrayed against me for one act of offence, if it was an act at all. On this point, a discussion of some length took place between him and the prosecuting attorney; but the judge decided, that in order to come at the subject properly, one case should be tried. Accordingly, the jury were selected and sworn, and took their seats.

Robert C. Caldwell, being qualified as witness, testified that he accompanied the district marshal to the steamboat Gen. Taylor, at the navy-yard, to conduct the prisoner to Pensacola, and in conversation with him, prisoner said that Silas came to his boat a little below the city, and got in with some others, but that he did not know him, and did not recollect ever seeing him before. This he (witness) believed to be correct, for it agreed with what the boy (Silas) had told him; and that prisoner also said that he had for a long time been of the opinion that he would aid slaves to secure their liberty, if opportunity offered.

Richard Roberts, called and sworn, testified, that at day-break, on the morning of the 8th of July, about five leagues to the westward of the light ship on Carryfut's reef, he fell in with the prisoner and seven black men in a boat. He was suspicious that the black men were runaway slaves; he went alongside of the boat with his vessel, and told his mate to make fast to the boat, and requested prisoner and the black men to come on board his sloop, and said that he was bound the same way, and would give them a tow; but he found out, by some of the black men, that they were runaway slaves; consequently, he took them all to Key West, and delivered them up to the authorities

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The author confined in the pillory.

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at that place. The prisoner was very sick at the time, but requested that he might be allowed to have his boat and proceed on, saying that he had a family that were dependent on him for support, and, if deprived of his services, would suffer in consequence.

The jury were charged, in a few formal words, and the first indictment handed to them. They retired to their room, and in about a half an hour returned with the verdict, that they had found the prisoner guilty, and awarded him to be branded on the right hand with the letters SS.

The same jury was sworn again, and by the judge charged on the other three indictments. They withdrew, and were out between two and three hours, and returned with the following verdict: that they had found the prisoner guilty of all the charges preferred against him in the other three indictments, and awarded him to stand in the pillory one hour, to be imprisoned fifteen days, and to pay a fine of one hundred and fifty dollars.

I was again remanded to prison, until the 16th, at 10, A. M.; when I was conducted to court, and on arriving at the court-house, (in front of which was the pillory,) the marshal proceeded to place me in the pillory. I told him that I had not yet received sentence. The marshal replied that this was sentence enough—referring to the pillory. But before I was properly secured, the deputy marshal ordered me to be brought into court. This order was obeyed; and I was again arraigned before the court, to receive the following sentence:—To be placed in the pillory for one hour; then brought into court, and branded in the

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right hand with the letters SS.; and then remanded to prison for fifteen days, and remain there until the fine (one hundred and fifty dollars) and the costs of prosecution should be paid.* I was then placed in the pillory, and when I had been there about half an hour, George Willis, mentioned in the fourth indictment, stepped from the crowd of spectators, who were standing by, (quietly beholding the inhuman administration of the laws of Florida,) and snatched from my head a handkerchief, which had been placed there by the deputy marshal, to screen me from the sun; saying, that he had offered a dollar to any person that would do it; but, as no one else would, he would do it himself. He then took from his coat pocket two rotten eggs, and hurled them very spitefully at my head, which took effect, and excited a burst of indignation from the bystanders. The said Willis was heard to offer the boys a great price for rotten eggs; but he could find none vile enough to accommodate him. He was indicted, and appealed to the December court in Saint Rosa (adjoining) county, and was there tried, and fined six and a quarter cents.

After the expiration of the hour, I was taken back of the court-house, and water given me to wash with, and then conducted into court again, to receive the remainder of my sentence. When about to be branded, I was placed in the prisoner's box. The marshal, Ebenezer Dorr, formerly of Maine, proceeded to tie my hand to a part of the railing in front.

* After repeated solicitations, I was able to get at the amount of the costs, the 6th of December, twenty-one days after my trial.

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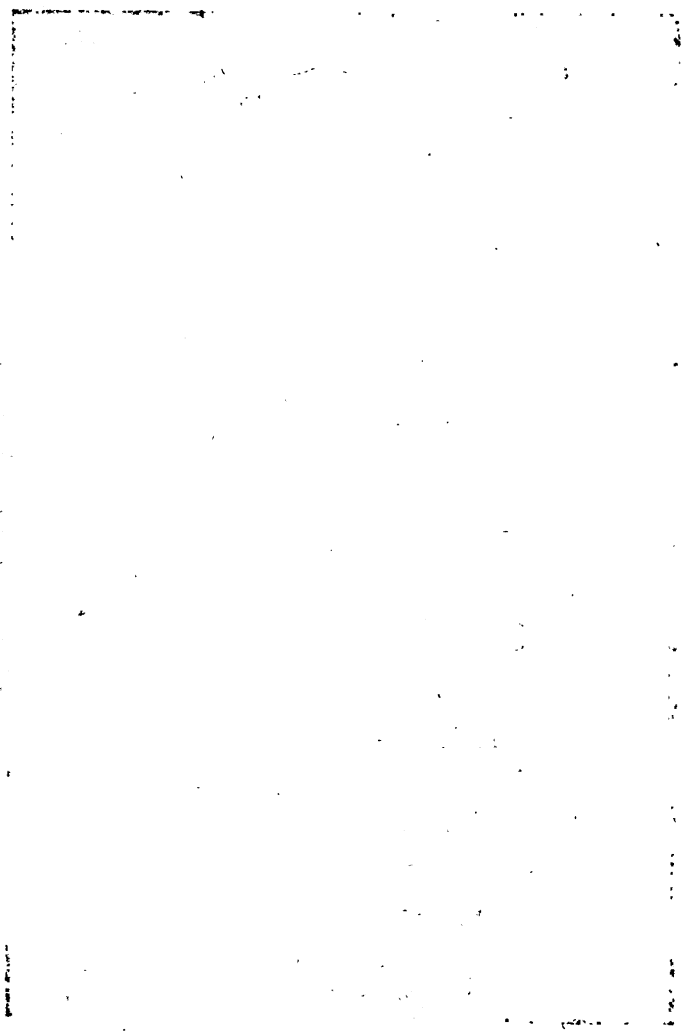

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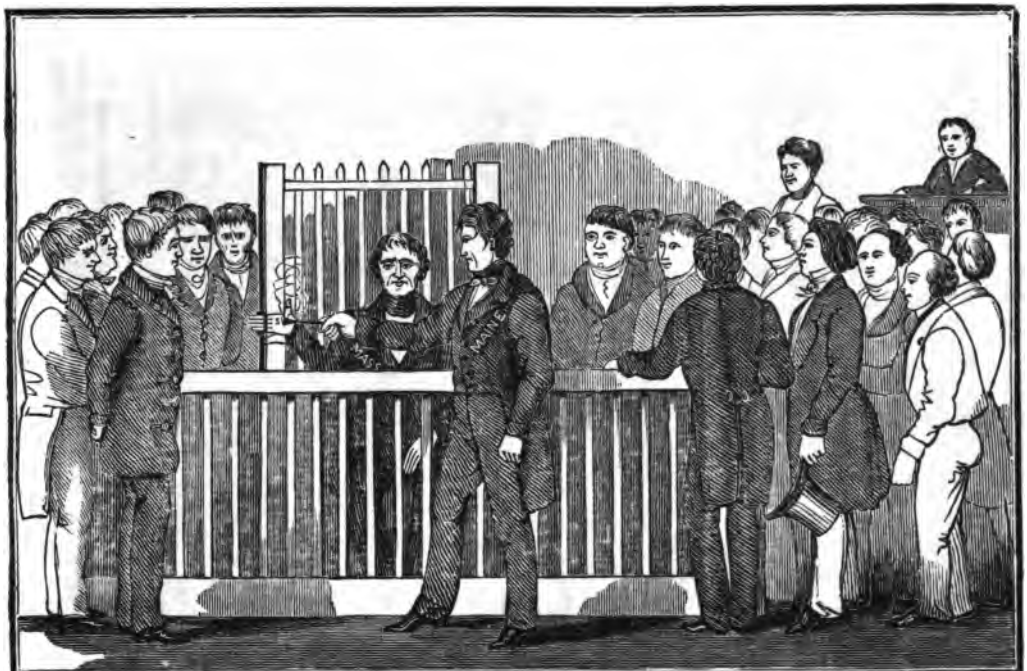

United States Marshal branding the author

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I remarked that there was no need of tying it, for I would hold still. He observed that it was best to make sure, and tied it firmly to the post, in fair view; he then took from the fire the branding-iron, of a slight red heat, and applied it to the ball of my hand, and pressed it on firmly, for fifteen or twenty seconds. It made a spattering noise, like a handful of salt in the fire, as the skin seared and gave way to the hot iron. The pain was severe while the iron was on, and for some time afterwards. There appeared to be but few that wished to witness the scene; but my friend, George Willis, placed himself where he could have a fair view, and feasted his eyes upon it, apparently with great delight.

I was then remanded to prison, but not put in irons as before. A few hours after my re-commitment, the marshal called and served three writs upon me, for trespass and damage, to the amount of one hundred and six thousand dollars, on the property of Robert C. Caldwell, Byrd C. Willis, and George Willis.

The Territory of Florida was established by a law of the *United States*, passed March 30, 1822.

The fifth section of this act provides, "that the legislative power shall be vested in the governor, and in thirteen of the most fit and discreet persons of the territory, to be called the Legislative Council," &c.; that "their legislative powers shall also extend to all the *rightful* subjects of legislation; *but no law shall be valid which is inconsistent with the constitution and laws of the United States,* or which shall lay any person under restraint, burthen, or disability, on account of his religious opinions, professions or wor-

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ship, in all which he shall be free to maintain his own and not burthened with those of another."

The tenth section of the same act provides, "That to the end that the inhabitants may be protected in their liberty, property, and the exercise of their religion, no law shall ever be valid which shall impair, or in any way restrain, the freedom of religious opinions, professions, or worship; they shall be entitled to the benefit of the writ of *habeas corpus;* they shall be bailable in all cases, except for capital offences, where the proof is evident, or the presumption great; all fines shall be moderate and proportioned to the offence, and excessive bail shall not be required, *nor cruel nor unusual punishments inflicted.*"

The Act of March 3rd, 1823, contains the *same* provisions.

The law under which I was indicted, was enacted by the territorial government, and provides as the punishment for the crime therein recited, imprisonment not exceeding six months; standing in the pillory; *branding*, or a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, at the discretion of the jury.

It seems plain, that the law of the United States having prohibited *cruel and unusual punishments*, and having declared that no law of the territorial government, inconsistent with the United States laws, shall ever be *valid;* this territorial law, under which I was punished, is void.

CHAPTER VI.

26. I will conclude my memorandum. L. T. and mother whipped the cook, alternately, spell and spell.

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F. T. whipped the cook, severely.

Dec. 2. Received a visit from T. M. Blunt, of New York. He had been in the city thirteen days.

5. A slave woman committed for not staying at home enough, and taken out next day.

8. Received a letter from John Scoble, London, and a resolution adopted by a committee of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society in regard to Charles T. Torrey and myself.*

9. A slave man committed for being in liquor and quarrelsome, and let out next day.

16. A slave man committed for disobedience; whipped ten blows with a paddle, and let out next day.

25. Two seamen committed from brig Hazard, of Portland, for attempting to obtain their discharge. They had refused to do duty on board.

27. A slave man committed. He was intoxicated.

28. He was let out again; and one of the seamen put in on the 25th, was discharged.

29. L. T. whipped the cook.

Jan. 3, 1845. L. T. whipped the cook twice.

9. Two white men committed for debt, and discharged. Received a letter from J. P. Nickerson, Esq.

10. L. T. whipped the cook. A slave man committed for going out of town at Christmas, and staying too long. A slave boy put in with me. He had played truant. He was let out next morning.

13. A white man committed, on suspicion of plotting to rob the mail.

14. L. T. whipped the cook.

15. A white man put in with me, to get sober, to use in evidence. He was taken out next day.

* See page 84.

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16. L. T. whipped the cook twice.

20. The white man committed the 13th, on suspicion, was discharged.

21. A slave boy committed for running away.

24. The other seaman, put in from brig Hazard, on the 25th ult., was discharged. A deserting soldier caught, committed, taken out, and sent to the navy-yard.

26. The slave man put in on the 10th, taken out, and sent to New Orleans, to be sold.

27. A slave woman committed for attempting to defend herself when about to be whipped by her mistress. The next day she was flogged twenty-four blows with the paddle, and twelve with the cowhide, and sent home.

Feb. 6. I will detail the following circumstance, for which I have been almost censured by warm friends. My readers can make their own comments. While eating my dinner, I was informed, by what I thought good authority, that the marshal would take me, at 4, P. M., before a magistrate, to be examined on other charges—what, my informant would not, or could not tell; but said that he heard the marshal say he was coming for me at four o'clock. I was somewhat apprehensive that it was a device of some persons ill-disposed towards me, and not satisfied with the course which the law had taken, and who were disposed to make use of other than legal means. I hinted this to my informant. His reply was, "They are going to play the devil with you." My suspicion was strengthened by the district attorney and judge being abroad at the time, and by the lateness of the hour selected

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for taking me from prison; so I did not think it prudent for me to leave the prison, except I could be convinced that I should be subject to no illegal dealings. At the above mentioned time, the marshal called, and requested me to go with him before a magistrate. I declined going, and gave him some reasons why; and told him, that whatever examination I was to undergo, I preferred it should take place where I was. The marshal left, and some time after returned, saying that the magistrate refused to come to the jail; and again requested me to go with him. I still declined. He then started to leave, when the jailer spoke to him a few minutes. He then returned, and read to me a letter from the district judge, who was then at Talahassee, (Middle Florida,) with instructions to take me before a magistrate for examination, on a charge of inducing three slaves to leave the service of their masters. The marshal then left me; and the reader may picture to his mind my feelings, as well as he can; for I have no faculty to express them on paper.

I had for several weeks been expecting to be liberated from my disagreeable situation, through the liberality of friends who had been imposed upon in regard to my true situation, and prevented from doing for me what they had attempted, by supplying the pecuniary means to satisfy the demands of the court; and had been twice disappointed; but now it seemed that the most favorable issue which I could expect, was to be chained up for three or four months longer in that woman whipping-shop, and go through another trial for the same offence; with the continual accumulation of obstacles to my release; and for my family

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to remain objects of charity; my aged parents and other near friends, suffering affliction; and all to gratify a few God and man-haters, who were feasting their rage upon one helpless object, whom Providence had in some measure placed where they could wreak their vengeance on him. These were some of the most favorable considerations which occurred to my mind; and which have since been realized.

Knowing that my enemies would spare no pains in doing me all the injury in their power, I thought it no harm to use some pacific means to place myself beyond their power; feeling confident that right did not demand the punishment my persecutors intended for me. Neither had I much time to reflect on the subject; for I was confident that the next day I should be put in irons again, and then about all chance to rescue myself would be cut off. Seeing that it required but little effort or ingenuity to open the doors myself, I gave way to the impulse of present feeling, and without any difficulty succeeded in opening the doors, without doing them one dollar's worth of injury; although I was charged ten dollars for repairing the door, including a new lock. For what purpose the lock was used I know not. I am sure it was not used on any of the jail doors, for the same locks that were on the doors when I went there, were on the doors when I left. But, as a very slight noise could be heard in the rooms above, the family took the alarm, and prevented my departure. I was made secure until the next day, when the marshal called, and without any ceremony, took me before three magistrates. Satisfactory evidence against me was

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produced to insure my committal until the next term of court in May, unless I give bail in the sum of $3,000. So I was remanded to prison again and put in irons, to await the result of what might follow.

I shall mention but a few more items from my memorandum, and then, briefly notice some other points.

Feb. 9. A slave man and woman were committed for being out too late, but discharged the next day.

10. The slave boy committed the 21st of last month, taken out, and sent to New Orleans, to sell. None but myself now in jail.

17. Two slave women and one man brought to jail and whipped ten blows each, on the bare back, and discharged. They were accused of using some of their master's money without his permission.

19. L. T. whipped the cook. The jailer's family moved to another house.

25. A slave boy committed, who received twenty blows with the paddle, and was then sent home. He had played truant.

27. A slave man brought to jail and whipped twenty-five blows with cowhide. His master was intoxicated; lost some change; the slave picked it up, and attempted to use some of it. A white man committed, for being intoxicated and quarrelsome.

March 1. A slave man committed, to gratify a drunken master, and released again the same day.

4. The white man committed on the 27th ult. was released.

16. A slave man brought to jail and flogged twenty-

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five blows with a paddle, and twenty with a cowhide. He was charged with not doing work enough.

19. A slave boy committed; flogged for playing truant, and let out the same day.

20. A sick slave man committed, I do not know for what, and let out the next day.

31. A slave man committed for getting intoxicated, and let out the next day.

April 1. A slave man committed; he had been sent to New Orleans for sale, but was returned.

2. A white man committed at his own request; he had been on a drinking spree, and was afraid he should do something to get him into trouble.

7. He was discharged.

12. A slave woman brought to jail and flogged severely. The slave man committed on the 1st, flogged twenty-four blows with the paddle, and thirty with the cowhide, to gratify his drunken mistress, as they could not sell him to their mind, in New Orleans. The flogging made him quite sick for several days. A white man committed, charged with assault and battery.

15. A slave man committed for allowing a horse to run with him in the street.

16. He was flogged fifteen blows with a cowhide, and discharged.

19. The slave man flogged on the 12th, was taken from jail and sent to Mobile to be sold.

This is the slave that was committed on the 10th of January, for staying too long with his wife and children at Christmas. His master had a plantation thirty or forty miles from Pensacola, where he had lived

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for a number of years, but had lately moved to Pensacola and offered his plantation for sale; and, not having employment for his slaves, was desirous to convert some of them into other property. And although this slave was permitted at Christmas to go and see his family, who still lived in the neighborhood he had formerly lived in, and were claimed as property by another man, yet his staying over his time, gave sufficient cause (as per slave code) for removing him forever from them, notwithstanding he offered to produce the proof of his inability to return at the time appointed, on account of sickness. Nevertheless, he was kept in jail sixteen days, and then sent to New Orleans. But being too old to meet with a ready sale in that market, he was returned again the 1st of April, and lodged in jail until the 12th, when his mistress came there in a rage, under the influence of liquor, and caused him to be flogged as mentioned above; and during the performance, she stood by and gave directions to the operator, yelping all the while at the mangled victim of her anger. A few days after, he was sent to Mobile for sale. He did not meet with a market, and was sent back; but soon after his return escaped from his tormentors, and I have since heard no more of him.

27. I received a letter from B. D. Wright, counsellor at law, enclosing a letter to him from H. I. Bowditch of Boston, relating to my circumstances.

May 1. A fugitive slave apprehended and committed; he had straight hair, and looked more like an Indian than a negro, and tried to pass himself for one.

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CHAPTER VII.

MAY the 8th, soon after 10 A. M., I was conducted to the court-house by the marshal and constable. The judge inquired if I had counsel. I replied that I had not. He then appointed Alfred L. Woodward to defend me, and also W. W. J. Kelly, Esq., assistant counsel. As Mr. Woodward was not duly informed in the case, we thought it best to have the trial put off until the next day. I had no desire to have counsel to manage my defence, not thinking it would be to my advantage, but to submit the case to the magnanimity of the jury; but as the judge had appointed counsel, I did not deem it advisable to reject it,—confident that it would excite his displeasure, which would be likely to have an unfavorable effect on my case.

I remarked to my counsel that I consented to a present trial, only on condition that all relating to the charges preferred against me, should be placed before the court for final action; and that no part or section be kept back or reserved for a future consideration. I was remanded to jail again, and that afternoon had an interview with Mr. Woodward.

May 9th, between 10 and 11 A. M., I was arraigned before the court, and soon after a jury was called and qualified. The district attorney produced three indictments against me, charging me with assisting as many slaves to escape from their masters, &c. A short discussion followed between the district attorney and counsel for the defendant, respecting the validity of

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the law in the multiplication of punishments for the same offence, and at different periods; but the court decided that I was liable to be tried separately for each charge alleged against me, although there was but one act in the commission.

Robert C. Caldwell, the only witness in the case, was sworn, and testified that he accompanied the deputy marshal to and from the steamboat General Taylor, where he went to conduct the defendant from said steamboat to the city, about the 20th July last, and on the passage to the city in the boat, he heard defendent say that he took from the shore near the city, the slaves mentioned in the indictments, on board his boat on the evening of the 22d June last, and went to sea with them, and was taken by a sloop not far from Cape Florida, and carried to Key West, and that defendant told him that he had been for a long time of the opinion that whenever an opportunity offered, he would assist slaves to obtain their freedom.

The district attorney addressed the jury for a few minutes, portraying the magnitude of the offence, the abuse of rights, &c., stating the result of the trials of Charles T. Torrey and Calvin Fairbanks, in Maryland and Kentucky—not forgetting to direct a few shot at the northern "fanatical abolitionists."

W. W. J. Kelly next made some very appropriate and feeling remarks upon the administration and severity of the law already inflicted on the prisoner for the same offence, and his long confinement in prison and in chains, and the deprivation entailed upon his deeply afflicted family, &c. He was followed by A. L. Woodward, commenting on

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the multiplicity of punishments for the same offence when no act of an incendiary, or violent character had appeared, to aggravate the case, but the prisoner had quietly submitted, without a murmur, to the heaviest punishments the law could inflict upon him. He appealed to the magnanimity and humanity of the jury to put a stop to this persecution; neither the law nor the interest and welfare of the country demanded more; even common sense forbade it. He requested them to render a verdict which their conscience would approve, and not to heap vengeance on the head of their helpless fellow-being, &c. &c.

The judge charged the jury to find the prisoner guilty, and not to allow any sympathy for the accused to sway them from inflicting strict justice on him, for it was not the accused who had the right to complain of the severity of the law, or demand their sympathy; but those that were dead and their friends.* The rights, safety, and honor of the country demanded justice from its courts.

The cases were submitted to the jury at about 12 M., and I was soon after remanded to jail again, and placed in irons as usual. The next day I received a note from W. W. J. Kelly, stating that the jury had that morning returned in court, and rendered a verdict of guilty in each case, and assessed me a fine of $5 in each case; and that I was to remain in custody until the fines and costs were paid.

The judge, district attorney, and my counsel were

*I know not what he meant by this expression, except he had his eye on that old St. Domingo hobby horse so often backed by the advocates of slavery.

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slave-holders, and some of the jury also. Surrounded by slave-holders, and in a section of the country where slavery is held to be one of their most sacred rights, what had I to expect at their hands; well known, and thoroughly proved to be hostile in the highest degree to the system of American slavery, and placed in their power, subject to their will, for the commission of an act, which is now held to be a capital offence, and punishable with death?* In consideration of these, and some other things which might be brought into the account, it shows that vengeance has not yet buried humanity, nor destroyed all the sympathy existing between men and those whose opinion differs from their own upon subjects of great importance.

The jury was an intelligent one, and among them was the city mayor, and I submitted my case cheerfully to their decision, confident that the verdict would be as mild as their responsible situation would admit of; and my expectations were more than realized; for which mild and humane verdict they are entitled to my grateful thanks and high consideration, for they have shown themselves to be untrammelled by prejudice, or actuated by revenge toward their helpless fellow-being.

I thought the judge manifested a considerable degree of prejudice against me, especially in this last trial; "Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad." But I saw no display of any unkind feelings from any

* The recommendation of the Legislative Committee, (see page 93,) was adopted at the same session.

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other persons, in or out of court, except by those who considered themselves so grievously injured and imposed upon by my allowing some of their two-legged chattels to walk off in company with me; or rather, to allow the wind to blow them away from that mill which is constantly grinding the faces of the poor, and whose owner, like the greedy horseleech, thirsts for more, "and saith, it is not enough."

CHAPTER VII.

HAVING gone through with the principal events in relation to my capture, return, imprisonment, and legal dealings, I shall notice a few points which may not be altogether improper or unimportant. And if it be necessary to make some personal allusions or pointed remarks, it shall not be done at the expense of truth, or in a spirit of ill-will to any. But as they in some instances have sacrificed truth and right for the sake of casting obloquy and envy upon me and the abolitionists, and to excite a greater degree of hatred against those who sympathize with their unfortunate and deeply injured fellow-beings, they have no reason to complain if I should expose them a little. All those who have had any control over me, will only be spoken of as relates to their conduct to my positive knowledge.

I have before said, that Captain Richard Roberts, of

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the sloop Eliza Catherine, treated me with civility while on board of his vessel. But who delegated to him the right to take charge of me and my boat by force on the high seas, without consent or ceremony, and convey me more than a hundred miles from my course, to a distant island, where I could have no means of self-defence, without any knowledge of my being in any way liable?

Is not this food for skepticism? Here are two individuals brought in contact, both professing the same religious faith, both having privately and publicly declared, before God and man, that they have resolved to be followers of him who taught his disciples to have compassion on, and extend their aid to their suffering fellow-men, and who illustrated the same by numerous precepts and examples of his own life;—one endeavoring to rescue some of those who had fallen among thieves and been cruelly dealt with, and trying to assist them to obtain their lost but natural rights, to which they are entitled by the declaration of American Independence, and by the laws of God given to men. The other, being in possession of superior power, not only opposing the efforts of the former, and preventing him from complying with the command of their divine Master, of doing unto others as he would that others would do unto him, were he in similar circumstances,—but placing his helpless brother in a situation where his life would be in jeopardy, and his dependant family and friends made miserable.

I do not wish to cast any undue reflections upon Captain Roberts; but I do lament the lack of moral

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courage, and the deep depravity of such professors of Christianity; for surely he that hath no pity on those of his fellow-creatures "whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" For saith Jesus, "As ye have not done it unto one of these, ye have not done it unto me."

Captain Roberts manifested great seriousness and devotion to the cause of religion. Yet profanity passed freely in the cabin and about his vessel's decks unrebuked. And I could not but think that he did not pay any too strict regard to honesty, as several articles that were taken from my boat on board of his vessel, could not be found by the sheriff, who went on board for them. I tried to have some conversation with him while on board, but that he carefully avoided by keeping at a distance. But Captain Roberts may be assured that I have no unkind feelings toward him; if he acted under the conviction of duty and justice, he has nothing to fear; but if otherwise his conscience and his Judge will adjust it.

The treatment of Sheriff Page, at Key West, was kind and obliging, and of him I should have no occasion to complain, if he had, as I requested, informed me what disposition was made of my effects which were in his charge.

Esquire Balany (I think that was the name of the magistrate to whom my case was submitted) manifested no unkind feelings towards me, and allowed me as much indulgence as circumstances would admit of. But the district attorney, whom I saw on two occasions, appeared to have "taken pepper in his nose," and soon gave me to understand that I had no

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favors to expect from that quarter. I also received kind treatment from the jailer at that place—but did not stay long enough at the soldiers' barracks to form any acquaintance there.

As to Commander Ferrand, of the steamboat General Taylor, on board of which I was shipped to Pensacola, he did not make any great display of good feeling in my behalf, although he indulged me in a steam bath a considerable part of the passage, by having me placed in the hold of the boat, where the engine and fire were, to my no small discomfort. Also good care was taken that I should neither dance nor play on the fiddle, by closely confining both hands and feet in irons. The lieutenant was a South Carolina chicken, well stuffed with McDuffieism, from whom no answer to any question could be obtained, or any reply directly to me. His name, I think, was Anderson. He had got his lesson from the nullification roost, and was prepared to look daggers at everything in the shape of abolitionism.

Soon after my committal to jail in Pensacola, a printed hand-bill was presented to me, offering a reward of $700 for the apprehension and delivery at Pensacola of seven slaves, at one hundred dollars each, if taken out of the territory; and if within its limits, fifty dollars each; and after giving some description of each, it goes on at a considerable length in detailing some truths and some falsehoods, and concludes in the following words: "From these and other circumstances, the belief exists that said Jonathan Walker has carried these slaves off in his boat. And therefore, for his apprehension and conviction of

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said offence, the subscribers will pay a further reward of *one thousand dollars*.

"R. C. CALDWELL,
GEO. WILLIS, by
JAS. QUIGLES, Agent."

CHAPTER IX.

IT may not be improper to introduce to the reader John M'Kinlay, editor of the Pensacola Gazette. Although he had no control over me, yet, as he had control over the only paper published in Pensacola, it was in his power to give an unfair statement of the circumstances, which he did not fail to do. But feeling perfectly willing to credit him with truth when he utters it, I here annex a paragraph in the Gazette of July 22d—only remarking that the last word is incorrect. But unfortunately in the next number (July 27th) he crowded into a part of a column of that small paper, twenty odd *lies* at my expense. Whether that libellous statement was voluntary on the part of its crouching editor, or whether he was dictated to, I know not. But to the paragraph:

"The man Jonathan Walker, who recently abducted the seven negro slaves belonging to Messrs. Willis and Caldwell, was captured with the negroes, in his whaleboat, about fifteen miles from the light-boat at Careyfut's Reef, on the 8th inst. by the wrecking sloop 'Eliza Catherine,' and brought to Key West on

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the 9th. The negroes are on board the sloop Reform, and are expected every hour.

"The U. S. steamer *Gen. Taylor*, Lt. Com. E. Farrand, arrived here last Thursday evening from Key West, brought prisoner Walker under a commitment from the civil authority; and on being taken before the U. S. District Judge, the court being in session, was immediately remanded to prison, on failing to give the necessary bail, to await his trial at the next term of the court. The indignation felt by this community on the subject of this outrage is very great. When the prisoner landed on the wharf the crowd was immense, and as he was escorted to the court-house by the deputy marshal, the crowd thronged the streets and side-walks, and the court-room was filled to overflowing with a highly excited mass of people. Great as the excitement was, however, and aggravated as its cause, to the credit of our good citizens be it said, not the least attempt was made to commit violence upon the person of the offender; on the contrary, while a few could not refrain from openly expressing their feelings of resentment, the great body seemed to look upon the prisoner as a miserable object of pity. How far he is truly to be pitied, however, we are not prepared to say, for the Gen. Taylor brings the rumor from Key West that Walker said his conduct was rash, but that he had done nothing wrong, and that he would do the same thing again if he had opportunity."

But to show with what sacredness he regards truth before the public, I quote a few statements made in the Gazette of November 23d. After some prelimi-

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nary remarks and observations upon my first trial, he says:

"On the first of these indictments the prisoner was arraigned and plead not guilty. But before proceeding to offer his testimony, the district attorney, with a frankness which cannot be too highly commended, disclosed to the *jury*, the prisoner's counsel, and the public, that he held in his hand four indictments against the prisoner, embracing as many distinct offences."

No jury had yet been empanneled, and no disclosures or allusions were made to the public; he (the district attorney) frankly stated to the court that he had four indictments against the prisoner for slave stealing.

"Several hours were spent in the discussion of this question, during which a host of authorities were arrayed on the part of the prosecution, to justify the course taken by the district attorney—while, on the other hand, many long arguments of great force were advanced by the opposite counsel."

Not more than forty minutes were consumed in discussion on the subject, and but two authorities (on cases) were cited to justify the course taken by the district attorney—so that all the long arguing of great force on the discussion was done in less than 40 minutes.

"The court held the matter under advisement until next day, and after sleeping on the point, gave it clearly in favor of the district attorney.

The court did not hold the matter under advisement until next day, for the whole trial, from commencement to end, did not exceed three hours, with the exception of the time consumed by the jury on the last indictments, and including that time the whole did not exceed five hours. (See first trial.)

"The day after the verdicts were rendered, the prisoner was called to the bar, and the sentence of the court pronounced upon him accordingly. He was placed in the pillory," &c.

Two days after the verdicts were rendered the prisoner was called, sentenced, &c.

I will notice one or two more of the *Gazette* man's editorial displays, and so leave him for the present.

Three days after the three last writs were served on me, and I was strongly chained in prison, to await a trial four months hence, the *Gazette* man belches forth—"It is a matter of wonder here, that

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the zeal and benevolence of Walker's abolition friends have not led to his being furnished with the means of release." In a short time after this, the proprietor of the same paper writes to a friend of mine in Boston, who made the inquiry through him to know on what conditions I could be released; and his reply was, that "it was impossible for anything to be done until after my trial at May court."

Since writing the foregoing, I have fallen in with the Pensacola Gazette, of June the 29th, 1844, in which an attempt was made to tell how and when I came there, and my business and course of conduct while there, &c.; but in that description they only succeeded in getting at now and then a truth. I here insert a short paragraph, which contains most of the truth in the statement:

"He was employed, after the bursting of the railroad and New Town bubble, to live at the depot, and take care of the railroad property.—He is a carpenter, or boat-builder, and occasionally employed as a mechanic.—He seemed a very devout Christian, and by his uprightness and integrity, had gained the confidence of many highly respectable members of our community. Whilst he lived at the depot, however, he had frequent occasions to have negroes to work for him, and he associated with them on terms of equality and intimacy—seating them by himself, at his table, while his daughters, (half grown girls,) waited on the table. He preached to the negroes, and exhorted them with brotherly affection, telling them that they were just as good as he was, and that the difference of color was a mere shadow, &c. He was suspected of tam-

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pering with the negroes, and being accessory to the concealment on board of a vessel and the escape of two slaves, about three or four years ago."

CHAPTER X.

I HAVE before stated that I was escorted from the steamboat General Taylor to the court-house by the deputy marshal. Although this officer had but little to do with me, yet so far as he had anything to do with me, he manifested a kind and friendly feeling. Those who have never been in critical circumstances cannot tell how sensibly every look, action and word is felt by one in my situation. The name of this officer is James Gonzalez, who is entitled to my thanks for his humane deportment towards me.

The marshal of the district, Ebenezer Dorr, was formerly from the State of Maine, with whom I had been well acquainted for eight or nine years, and we had always been on terms of friendship; but now our mutual feelings were about to be tested; for circumstances having rendered our situations very different, there was no more equality. He was a practical slave-holder and a strong advocate of the system; I an uncompromising opponent of American slavery in all its forms; he holding a high office under the territorial government; I, a prisoner for a violation of the territorial law, placed in his custody, and subject almost entirely to his control. I do not pretend that

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our former acquaintance or friendly intercourse entitled me to any unusual indulgence, or that he should violate any duty, or deviate from the path of justice to accommodate me, or ameliorate my condition; but I did suppose that there should be some consideration made on the score of humanity, towards any one in so feeble a state as I was at the time of my committal, which might aid in the restoration of health, or that would not tend to reduce me still more; for the reader has already been informed that I was placed in heavy irons, without even a handful of straw to lie on, or anything done to provide me with food suitable for a sick person—for it was impossible for me to recover solely on my jail fare. Not but the quantity was sufficient, but the quality was not suitable for one out of health; and I deprived, as was supposed, of what money I had for several days; so that all means were thwarted of providing for myself. But, as I wish not to forget any favor shown me, I pass to his credit a bottle of milk which he gave me, and an occasional call and inquiry after my health, and the loan of some newspapers, &c.

My correspondence had to pass under his inspection, and for one or two words in a private letter to my wife, respecting my situation, I received from him a severe reprimand. But suffice it to say, that he might have made my situation more irksome, or he might have ameliorated it, without infringing upon his official duties. He permitted George Willis to take from my head a handkerchief, which his deputy had placed there to keep off the violence of the sun, and heave rotten eggs at me, whilst standing in the

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pillory, without interfering other than saying, "Don't, Mr. Willis, for we have got to take him into court,"—as much as to say, "he would appear indecent," or "some one's senses will be offended."

Walker Anderson, the district attorney, who, by the bye, was the prosecuting officer, is entitled to my thanks for his kindness and humanity towards me, both in his private and official capacity. He is a mild, considerate and intelligent man; and were he not surrounded by a powerful slavery influence, any society might be proud of such a member. I have for a number of years known him, and can say that he is of the most amiable disposition of any person I ever knew in Pensacola—notwithstanding a few misstatements in his letter to the governor of Florida, in reply to a letter from the secretary of Massachusetts to that functionary, which I may notice hereafter. For a considerable part of my confinement, he furnished me with reading matter and the news of the day; and in his absence, his kind and amiable wife would supply me with literary food.

It may not be out of place here to make mention of George Willis and Robert C. Caldwell, the claimants of the slaves that went away with me. George Willis claims a high standing in society, is considered a man of considerable property; said to be the owner of a considerable number of slaves, with whom he is very severe; he is a haughty, overbearing and cruel man, and associates with but few. He was marshal of the west district of Florida, two or three years, whilst I lived in Pensacola; during which time he had the honor of hanging three or four colored men.

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From my previous knowledge of him, I was prepared to expect no favor from that quarter, and had he been at home when I was brought back to Pensacola, I have no doubt he would have sought illegal revenge upon me;—the manner in which he displayed his feelings at the court-house, when undergoing the penalties of my first trial, may be considered a specimen of the man.

R. C. Caldwell was at this time, a second lieutenant in the navy, but has since been promoted to a first lieutenancy. He is from the State of Ohio; and, as I have been credibly informed, had studied for the ministry, but finally entered the navy; and two or three years ago, married a wealthy young woman in Pensacola, who had a number of slaves, and in this way became in possession of property and slaves.—Thus he is year after year receiving pay from the United States government, for overseeing his own or his wife's slaves. My first personal acquaintance with this man took place in the boat in which I was brought from the steamboat General Taylor to Pensacola, while in charge of the deputy marshal. He visited me several times soon after my committal, appeared very friendly and seemed disposed to urge upon my mind some religious considerations, and had the politeness to bring me some pound-cake, as he called it; but no sooner had he succeeded in getting possession of what little I had in the shape of property, than every friendly and social consideration was abandoned, and he spared no pains to persecute me to the extent of his ability; and was still anxious to gratify his malignant appetite on the victim of his rage, to the very last.

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With some reluctance, I introduce to the reader Francis Torward, the jailer, or constable, but more commonly designated by the title of city marshal. The jail is the property of the city, and the jailer (city marshal) is chosen yearly by a vote of the city, and is paid a salary per month. His duty is to look after the peace and quiet of the city; to commit and release all prisoners; to ring the city bell on all proper occasions, especially at the hours of 8, P. M., in winter, and 9, P. M., in summer; and to take up all slaves found in the streets without a pass after the bell has been rung, &c. He provides the prisoners with their food and drink, for which he is allowed 37½ cents each, per day. He also inflicts punishment upon slaves sent there by their masters or mistresses to be punished. I know not whether he is under any official obligation to perform this task, or whether custom has made it a rule. For this service, I believe he is entitled to extra pay from the persons who employ him for that purpose. It is by no means a general rule for masters or mistresses to have their slaves flogged by the city marshal, for it frequently costs them some loss of their service or time, besides what they have to pay the marshal; so that but few are disposed to incur the expense, when they can save it by a few minutes' exertion of their own muscular powers, and at the same time feed their rapacious revenge upon their helpless slaves. I am not prepared to say what the compensation is for flogging, or whether it is in all cases the same, or proportioned to the degree of infliction; but I am inclined to think there is a stipulated price, and I had grounds for the conclusion that it is 75 cents, each

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time. There appears to be no amount of punishment fixed by any law or rule, but the kind and quantity is prescribed by the master or mistress, as their feelings or inclination may influence them.

Suppose the slave whom I have so often mentioned as being flogged by her mistress, had cost her master 75 cents for each whipping, the amount would have been about $30 from the 19th July, when I was committed, to the 19th February, when the family moved from the jail. The reader will have perceived that those whippings were much more frequent in the warm weather than in the cold, and also before her mistress' confinement, than afterwards. The reader is at liberty to make his or her comments or conjectures as to the cause of this.

It may be thought that those whippings were of no great severity, and merely administered as a parent would correct a child; but to test the quality let a person be covered only with a thin cotton frock, and let a woman, excited to uncontrolled passion, apply a raw-hide switch to the back of the other with her greatest strength from twenty to fifty blows, and they would not need a repetition of it to ascertain its mildness. But some of those floggings were applied by a more powerful arm than that of the mistress; and the marks and scars were visible upon the slave's neck and face from the time I was first committed to the day of my release. My senses have conveyed to my heart inexpressible feelings of disgust and abhorrence for such a mode of discipline or punishment upon rational human beings. Often when these exhibi-

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tions have taken place, have I thought of the following lines:

"Hate's quivering lip, the fix'd, the starting eye,
The grin of vengeance, and the forehead pale,
The deep drawn breath, the short hyena cry,
All in connection tell the dreadful tale"
Where cowhide, paddle, chains, and slavery does prevail.

If any parents, guardians or masters, wish their child, minor, or servant, to hate them with a perfect hatred, let them flog them! If parents, guardians or their masters, wish to destroy all good will and ready obedience to superiors, and all self-respect in their children, minors or servants, let them flog them, and they may be assured that they are in a fair way to obtain that object.

I was somewhat acquainted with the jailer before my incarceration, but not at all with any of his family; but I soon found that what St. Paul called the weaker vessel was the stronger vessel, for none could carry so great a press of sail as my hostess. Her colors were nailed at mast-head, and all about the premises were to be controlled by her undisputed sway.

It may be asked what treatment I received at their hands? I answer, that for the most part of the time, it was better than that which fell to the lot of other prisoners; after being there for some time, by some cause or other, I seemed to get partly into their good grace, and was treated by her with perfect civility and some degree of kindness; and frequently found in my dish some little luxuries, unusual, I presume, for prisoners to receive except at their own expense, or by the kind-

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ness of friends. But if I had had no means to provide anything for myself, I should much of the time have gone hungry, as the portion given me which I could eat, was insufficient. My food consisted mostly of bread and fish for breakfast, and bread and a dish of soup or some calavance beans for dinner. The bread was generally good, made of flour, and most of the time raised; and the rest was mixed up and baked in thin cakes without raising. I had the curiosity to weigh it for two weeks, and the result was ten pounds seven ounces for fourteen successive days, two pounds thirteen and one half ounces of which was Johnny-cake, or flour and water kneaded up and baked by the fire as above. Some days I had but little other than bread given me.

The district attorney says in his letter to Governor Branch, Nov. 9th, 1844, that I "informed him that I was in perfect health," and that "I assured him that I had nothing to complain of in the treatment of the jailer and his family." He should have said that I informed him that my health was as good as my situation would admit of; and that I did not complain of the treatment of the jailer or his family.

It was for my benefit to make as little complaint as possible, and therefore, having a little money, I supplied at my own expense what was lacking on their part, which amounted to little more than a dollar per week during my imprisonment, for food, washing, and a little clothing.

The reader may not readily understand how I ascertained the weight of the bread I have spoken of. By the use of a small stick and a little paper and

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twine, I made a balance, and for weights I used silver coin; and in this way I also weighed the chain attached to my leg, by weighing one link of medium size, and multiplying the others by that, which product was twenty-two and one-half pounds, beside the shackle which encircled my ankle.

As to the persons, whose names I have here been using, I have no inclination to misrepresent or abuse them, for I delight not in vilifying my fellow-creatures, but would far rather speak well of them; and what I have here said, has been under a sense of deep moral feeling, and I have suppressed much that might have been said with propriety, and in strict accordance with truth. But if any, whose names I have here dealt with, or may deal with, can show in any instance where I have misused them, I will hasten to make public confession, and beg their pardon.

CHAPTER XI.

I now introduce some correspondence, and the expressions of others in relation to my case. As soon after I was committed to prison in Pensacola, as I was able to write, I sent a note to Benjamin D. Wright, counsellor at law, requesting an interview with him. My object was to obtain information in regard to some points of law relating to my case, as then there was a probability of my coming to a trial before the November term; and after the lapse of several weeks, I received the following reply:

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Pensacola, Aug. 30, 1844.

SIR,—I have for some time thought I ought to answer your note, handed me some weeks ago, in which you request me to call and see you. I have not called for reasons which I will frankly state.

In common with all who know you as a citizen here, I was very indignant, not so much at the *injury* which your offence occasioned, as at the *insult* which it implied to the whole community. This feeling is still strong in me, but I feel that it is gradually giving way to gentler impulses.

It is the indignant feeling above mentioned that has hitherto prevented me from seeing you. If the object of your note was to avail yourself of my professional services, I can only say that after thinking the matter over, I do not see how I can refuse them, nor do I think that by the time the November court comes on, I should desire to refuse, so that if you cannot do better, I will *then* attend to your defence.

Yours, &c.

BENJAMIN D. WRIGHT.

MR. J. WALKER.

The reason of my requesting an interview with B. D. Wright, was, knowing that he was a candid man, and experienced in his profession, and that I should be likely to obtain correct information from him.

In a day or two after I wrote to my family giving them a statement of what had taken place, and my present condition; the substance of which has been made public through the newspaper press. And in due time I received several letters from friends; from one I make an extract, and another I give entire.

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Harwich, Aug. 17th, 1844.

My very dear suffering friend Jonathan;—after much concern, we have had a letter from thine own hand; the truth of which we can confide in. Thy family are all in health. Some days after the news of thy capture came, I went over to see thy wife and thy parents, and they expressed much concern about thee. I mentioned to them the well-known passage of Scripture: "if ye suffer for righteousness, happy are ye," &c. "Be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled, but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts."

At a meeting, on the first day of August, we made a small collection for thy family. We also chose a committee to see to thy family. It was a consolation to many, to have a letter from thee; many sympathize with thee. I think I can see the good hand of God with you, in chastening and afflicting you. I rejoice to see thy integrity and thy confidence in Christ; thy believing that he has stood by thee, and that thou canst not part with him! Yea, let everything else go first! Yea, let life go before Him. Jesus says, "he came not to do his own will, but the will of his Father that sent him!" and he has left us an example that we should walk in his steps; "for he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin." When liberty, truth and right, has been trampled upon for a long time; the authority, law, and government of God been disregarded; human inventions set up; the laws, usages, and customs of men been considered paramount to the will, law, or government of God, it will, surely, cost more or less suffering to make a change.

E. NICKERSON.

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In a subsequent letter the same person says, "My dear brother, you have a glorious trial; make a right use of it."

Harwich, Aug. 20, 1844.

CAPT. J. WALKER:

DEAR SIR,—When your condition became known here, a good deal of interest was excited in your behalf. A meeting of the citizens was held at the congregational meeting-house yesterday, (19th,) agreeably to previous notice, to take into consideration your case; and the undersigned were made a committee to ascertain through you, your friends, or the authorities of Pensacola, in what way, if at all, your condition may be ameliorated.

We learn that you were committed to prison for want of bail; and we wish to know whether you would be now released from confinement if the necessary bail should be obtained? Do you wish for bail? or had you rather remain confined until your trial? Have you any counsel? And if not, do you wish for any? And if so, have you the means of employing counsel? Or does the government furnish counsel for you? You state in your letter that you are chained so that you cannot walk your room. This we cannot but regret; as we know that a little exercise would afford you much relief, and we trust that the humanity of those who have you in keeping, will prompt them to afford you some relief in this particular. Is the room in which you are confined, so ventilated that you can have a supply of fresh air? Are you confined alone, or are there others in the room with you?

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if so, how many? Will there be a special court for your trial, or shall you wait till the regular term in November? An early answer to the above inquiries, or so many of them as may be of importance to you, is desired.

From our long acquaintance with you, we are assured, that the act for which you have been arrested, and are now suffering, was done under a high sense of moral obligation. How far that sense has been mistaken, is not for us to determine. We can only regret the occurrence; leaving the adjustment of its morality between you and your own conscience.

Have you a comfortable supply of good and wholesome food? Is there any way in which we can be of any service to you? If so, inform us, and our efforts to render your condition more comfortable shall not be wanting.

SIDNEY UNDERWOOD.
ELKANAH NICKERSON, JR.

I prefix here a copy of three official letters; the first written by John G. Palfrey, Secretary of the State of Massachusetts to the Governor of Florida; the second by Governor Branch, of Florida, to Walker Anderson, District Attorney for the Western District of West Florida; the third by Walker Anderson, in reply to the two first.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
Secretary's Office, Boston,
October 2nd, 1844.

SIR,—I have it in charge from the Governor of this Commonwealth, respectfully to ask your Excellency's

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attention to the case of Jonathan Walker, a citizen of Massachusetts, said to be now in prison in Pensacola, in the Territory of Florida, awaiting his trial on a charge of abducting certain slaves from that territory.

It is represented to the Governor, by respectable persons, that the confinement of said Walker is attended with circumstances of unusual hardship: that, in a feeble state of health, he is loaded with heavy irons, and suffering from other severe treatment, unnecessary for his safe keeping and endangering his life. It is further alleged that his friends are confident of his having a good legal defence against the charge for which he stands committed, but that they need time to take the proper steps for his vindication, he being a poor man, the head of a numerous family dependent upon his labor, and unable to command the necessary professional aid, without assistance, which cannot be immediately obtained. And the Executive of this Commonwealth is invoked to interest itself in any manner consistent with its constitutional obligations, to obtain a mitigation of the hardships which he is said to be enduring, and such a delay of proceedings as may afford opportunity for securing that highest object of justice, safety to the innocent.

The Governor feels it to be due to the importance of the occasion, as well as to the high respectability of the sources whence these representations proceed, and to the sensibility which exists upon the subject, among the good people of this Commonwealth, to apprize your Excellency of the circumstances, as they are reported to him, and respectfully request such

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exertion of influence or authority, on your part, as official obligations may permit, and the claims of justice and humanity may dictate, to prevent the exercise of needless severities in this case by subordinate officers, and to cause the legal proceedings to be delayed for a sufficient time to afford the accused party every reasonable advantage for establishing his innocence. I am accordingly directed, respectfully to request your Excellency to cause this prosecution to be stayed long enough to admit of arrangements being made to obtain for said Jonathan Walker, such able and effectual assistance as may enable him to maintain his rights before the tribunals of his country. And I am further instructed to request that your Excellency will be pleased to take care that he may be relieved from any illegal or unusual severity in the manner of his confinement.

Assured that your Excellency will estimate justly the solicitude on the part of the Governor of this Commonwealth, for the safety of its helpless citizens, which dictates this communication, I have the honor to subscribe myself, Most respectfully,

Your Excellency's obedient servant,

JOHN G. PALFREY, *Secretary.*

To his Excellency, the Governor of Florida.

Executive Office, October 25th, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR,—I herewith transmit to you a copy of a somewhat extraordinary communication which I have received from the *Secretary* of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. I have not, and probably may not take any *official* notice of it, for reasons which

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will readily occur to you. *You* are, however, at liberty to make such use of it as you may think proper, as I have entire confidence in your discretion and ability to do justice to a subject which seems to excite the *sensibility* of the *good people* of that Commonwealth, and which cannot be one of indifference to the southern slave-holder.

With the highest respect and esteem,

I am yours truly,

JOHN BRANCH.

To Walker Anderson, U. S. Att'y for West Florida.

Office of the Attorney of the U. S. for West Florida.
Pensacola, November 9th, 1844.

SIR,—On my return a few days since from Walton Court, I found your Excellency's letter of the 25th October, enclosing a copy of a communication to yourself from the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, on the subject of Jonathan Walker, now in prison here, awaiting his trial on a charge of negro stealing.

Though I have kept myself informed, generally, as to Walker's condition in prison ever since his arrest, I have taken pains since the receipt of your letter, to procure more precise information on the subject, both from himself and from the officers who have had him in charge, and I am happy to inform your Excellency, that the Governor of Massachusetts has been entirely misled by the "respectable persons" who have represented to him, "that the confinement of said Walker is attended with circumstances of unusual hardship, and that in a feeble state of health, he is loaded with

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heavy irons, and suffering from other severe treatmen unnecessary for his safe keeping, and endangering his life."

When he was committed, he was in very feeble health, resulting from his long exposure at sea in an open boat; but notwithstanding his confinement, his health has gradually ameliorated until the present moment, when, as he informs me, and as he looks to be, he is in perfect health. He assures me that there is nothing he has to complain of in the treatment of the jailer and his family towards him, and that his prison fare has been satisfactory to him, except that for a short time after his arrest, his feeble health made his ordinary fare distasteful to him; but that he was soon able to supply himself with such things as he wished.

It is true that he has been confined with a single chain around his ankle, but this was not regarded as "unnecessary to his safe keeping," nor as being a "circumstance of unusual hardship." The crime with which he is charged is characterized by our law as a very grave one, and the executive officers of our court have looked to that law for their guidance, rather than to the opinions of those to whom they at least owe no accountability. Their duty required them to keep their prisoner securely, and I think I may assure your Excellency, that in performing this duty they have in no degree violated the dictates of humanity, or infringed any of the rights of the unfortunate man.

I trust that these representations, when conveyed by your Excellency to the Governor of Massachusetts

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may allay "the sensibility which exists upon the subject among the good people of that Commonwealth."

The Secretary of the Commonwealth proceeds to say, "I am directed to request your Excellency to cause his prosecution to be stayed long enough to admit of arrangements being made to obtain for said Jonathan Walker such able and effectual assistance as may enable him to maintain his rights before the tribunals of his country." There is no disposition, I am sure, in any of the officers of this court to press this trial with unusual precipitancy, but on the contrary, there is a sincere desire to do justice, and no more than justice, to the accused; and I may add that there prevails a wish to receive with due respect, the interposition of the authorities of Massachusetts in his behalf; but I apprehend to postpone the trial indefinitely, and thereby prolong a confinement considered so irksome, could scarcely be yielded with propriety to the request of the Governor of Massachusetts, if opposed to the wishes of the prisoner himself. He has a right to demand his immediate trial, and I have been assured by him only to-day that he is anxious that his case should be disposed of during the present term of the court. This desire of his, so natural in itself, we shall feel bound to regard as paramount in its claim upon us, to the wishes of his friends abroad —to say nothing of his right to enforce it. I trust, therefore, that his Excellency of Massachusetts will perceive that we are prevented from complying with his request by the superior duty of yielding to the wishes of the prisoner in this regard.

Walker has expressed a wish that his trial should

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be postponed to as late a period of the *term* as practicable, and it has accordingly been fixed for the second week of the term, and I doubt not it will be put off to a still later period of the term, if the prisoner should show good cause therefor.

I deem it scarcely necessary to assure your Excellency that the delay so earnestly pressed upon your Excellency by the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is not indispensable "to obtain for Walker such able and effectual assistance as may enable him to maintain his rights before the tribunals of his country." Counsel is within his reach here, fully competent to the task of maintaining his rights anywhere, and your Excellency, I am sure, anticipates me, in the assurance that his poverty will oppose no obstacle to his procuring the aid of such counsel.

I remain, Sir, with much respect,

Your Excellency's ob't serv't,

WALKER ANDERSON.

U. S. Att'y. for West Florida.

To his Excellency, JOHN BRANCH,

Governor of Florida, Tallahassee.

Through the kindness of a friend in New York, I received the following resolution and the annexed epistle, just two months from its adoption. But the original paper, with some others, was wrested by force from me, and laid before a committee of the legislative council of the Territory of Florida, for their action, which report I place below. By some exertion I succeeded in obtaining all the papers except the one of which I place a copy here.

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British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, for the Abolition of Slavery and the Slave trade through out the world.

27 New Broad street, London.

At a meeting of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, held at 27 New Broad street, on Friday, October 4, 1844, George Stacy, Esq., in the chair, it was resolved unanimously,

That, considering the enormous wickedness of American Slavery, whether viewed in relation to the iniquity of its principle, which deprives nearly three millions of human beings of their personal rights, or to the atrocity of its practice, which subjects them to the deepest degradation and misery; this committee feel it to be their duty, publicly and warmly, to express their sympathy with those devoted friends of humanity, the Rev. Charles T. Torrey and Captain Jonathan Walker—who are now incarcerated in the prisons of Maryland and West Florida, for having aided or attempted to aid some of their countrymen in their escape from bondage; and to assure those Christian philanthropists that they consider the cause for which they may hereafter be called to suffer, honorable to them as men and as Christians; and the laws under which they are to be arraigned, as utterly disgraceful to a civilized community, and in the highest degree repugnant to the spirit and precepts of the gospel. On behalf of the committee,

THOMAS CLARKSON, *President.*

JOHN SCOBLE, *Secretary.*

To Capt. Jonathan Walker.

October 8, 1844.

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27 New Broad street, London.

DEAR SIR—The painful circumstances in which you have been placed by your humane and Christian attempt to deliver some of your fellow-men from the sufferings and degradation of slavery, are not, as you will perceive by the accompanying resolution, unknown to the Abolitionists in Great Britain.

They truly sympathize with you in your affliction, and they trust that the efforts which are to be made for your deliverance from the power of evil men and evil laws, will be succeeded by the divine blessing.

Your faith and patience may be greatly tried, but I trust you will be divinely sustained through the conflict, and that you will have a large share in the prayers, as well as in the sympathies and assistance of your friends.

Trusting that you will meet with becoming fortitude your approaching trial, and that whatever may be its issue, you may find the "joy of the Lord to be your strength,"

I am, dear sir, with great respect and esteem,

Yours very truly,

JOHN SCOBLE, *Secretary.*

To Capt. Jonathan Walker.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, LONDON.

New York City, July 12th, 1845.

VERY KIND AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED FRIENDS:

I arrived this day in this city, and embrace the earliest convenient opportunity to acknowledge the recep

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tion of the kind letter of your worthy secretary, John Scoble, and the accompanying resolution adopted at your meeting in London, on the 4th of October, 1844, expressive of your opinion of, and feelings towards Charles T. Torrey and myself. The letter was forwarded through the kindness of a friend in New York, and reached me just two months after its date. But it is impossible for me to express upon paper the feelings which the reception of the letter and resolution excited.

I am an American-born citizen, and have lived forty-five years under this republican form of government, but I am ashamed to acknowledge that, while enjoying the greatest social and religious privileges of any nation upon the earth, boasting of our liberal and free institutions, of the inherent right of all men to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," of our arts and sciences, civilization, and the dispensation of the gospel; yet we cherish in our midst the most heinous, unjust, oppressive, and God-provoking system that ever cursed the dwellers of earth, nourishing jealousy and discord through the land, poisoning the life-streams of our Union, corroding the vitals of this young and growing nation, and destroying the mental and moral faculties of one portion of its inhabitants, to corrupt and debase the other; and if any one is found among her sons whose humane feelings prompt him to extend an act of sympathy towards his deeply injured fellow-subjects—who have nowhere to look with any earthly hope for the mitigation of their wretchedness, but in the hearts of the few, and are denied the privilege of seeking redress from the laws and coun-

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sels of their country—such an one is sought out and hunted like a beast of prey, and dealt with as a traitor to his country, and as a slayer of his fellow-men; and this, notwithstanding every precaution has been used to prevent any act of violence on the part of the truly wronged, and none but pacific means are countenanced to obtain relief.

While my mind has been filled with such considerations, and while undergoing the most degrading punishments that human invention has produced, from the hands of my own countrymen, I receive from a high and honorable source in a foreign and monarchical country, the warm and cordial sympathies, and favorable consideration and approbation of the cause for which I suffer, and detestation of the course pursued against me, from entire strangers, whom I never saw, and probably never shall see this side of another world.

I heartily respond, gentlemen, to the declaration in the last clause of the resolution which you adopted, that "the laws under which we were to be arraigned are utterly disgraceful to a civilized community, and in the highest degree repugnant to the *spirit* and *precepts* of the *gospel*."

You are probably aware ere this of the result of my first trial in November last, under four indictments. Since that time I have been detained in prison until the 16th of June, when, after having undergone a second trial, on the 9th. of May, under three indictments, I was released by the liberality of friends, in paying the fines and costs of prosecution, which were charged against me. With the exception of two

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and a half months, I was kept in chains during the whole of my imprisonment.

Let me assure you again, my dear friends, of my gratitude for your kind and humane consideration. It is a source of deep regret to me that the original letter and resolution were taken from me while in prison by the authorities, but not however till I had secured a copy of each, which I hold invaluable. They were laid before the legislative council of Florida, and a report made thereon, a copy of which I enclose.

Trusting that all needful blessings from our divine Lord may attend you individually and collectively in all coming time, and enable you to accomplish much in the righteous cause you have espoused for the amelioration of the condition of the deeply-injured and oppressed children of men,

I remain, respectfully, your grateful friend,

JONATHAN WALKER.

REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF FLORIDA.

Mr. Ferguson, from a joint select committee, made the following report:

The joint select committee, to which was referred the governor's communication in relation to the correspondence of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society with Jonathan Walker, with the accompanying papers, beg leave to report:

That they regard the right of defining crimes and passing laws to prevent or punish such crimes, as amongst the clearest and most valuable rights of a free people, and the interference of foreign states with the exercise of that right, as insulting and unwarrantable

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and that it should be repelled promptly and indignantly.

This principle, so undeniable in the abstract, acquires additional interest and importance from the circumstances of the particular case to which the duty of the committee has directed its attention. It can no longer be denied that systematic and powerful influences are at work throughout a large portion of Europe and many parts of our own country, the direct tendency of which is to impair our rights of property, and to involve ourselves and the unconscious objects of this false philanthropy in one common ruin. A vicious fanaticism, clothed in the garb of religion, is prowling around our borders, and by means of its more reckless and abandoned instruments, invading our inmost sanctuaries, whose direct purposes, scarcely concealed, are to deluge our very hearth-stones in blood, and to rear an altar to its false principles upon the ruin of all that is precious to us as freemen and dear to us as men.

The most sanguine and forbearing amongst us must long since have been painfully convinced of the existence of this unfriendly feeling towards us among some of our own countrymen; and the public mind throughout the whole of the Southern States has been roused to a state of distrust and watchfulness, which augurs ill for that harmony which is becoming between members of the same great family. The South has no cause for self-reproach, growing out of this feeling of estrangement. Their position has been eminently that of self-defence; and they are prompted to maintain that position by every consideration of

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duty and of self-interest. They would be recreant to themselves, and unworthy of the rank which they hold among the nations, if they were to falter in the assertion of their rights and their resistance of this foul injustice.

In the unhappy dissensions which have grown up between ourselves and our countrymen of the North, there are, however, considerations prompting us to still longer forbearance. It is not easy to forget that we are brothers, enjoying the same great heritage of liberty which was purchased by the blood of our common sires. We are reluctant to let go our confidence in the returning sense of justice of those who are bound to us by such endearing ties, and we will not willingly dissever from our soil the blood-honored fields of Lexington, of Bunker Hill, and of Saratoga—we will "suffer long and be kind"—will bear many things, hope many things, and endure many things. And we do this the more readily because there is no hesitation amongst us as to the limits of this endurance. Among the millions of bosoms that are throbbing under a sense of the injury and outrage which have been so wantonly inflicted upon us by our Northern brethren, though there are many that plead for longer forbearance and forgiveness, there is probably not one that does not feel that there is a point beyond which forbearance would be ruin and dishonor—there is not one that would not unhesitatingly fling to the winds all the cherished recollections of the past, and all the exulting hopes of the future, rather than bow down in slavish abasement to the demands of those who seek to sacrifice us upon the shrine of their unholy fanaticism.

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But the feelings which thus prompt us to forbearance under the injuries done to us by the abolition incendiaries of the North, teach no such forbearance towards the foreign incendiaries, who intermeddle with our domestic institutions, and seek to interfere with the administration of our laws. We regard their false and intrusive philanthropy with unmingled resentment, and it becomes us to resist at once, and in the most effectual manner, all their efforts to control us in our internal police. The committee regret that the only means which are within our reach to counteract their hostile designs, and to avert danger from ourselves, consist of increased penalties for the violation of our laws, and in stricter police arrangements in regard to the negro population. It is to be regretted that the punishment for such flagrant crimes should fall rather upon the less responsible agent, who is induced by a desire of gain or by an ignorant fanaticism to come among us on his unholy crusade, than on the more wicked and intelligent felon, who plots his cowardly schemes of mischief in the security of a foreign country and still more is it to be regretted that we are constrained, in self-defence, to cut off some of those indulgences to our SLAVES, which has made their situation hitherto one of happy contentedness.

But the responsibility is not with us. Heavy is the accountability of the Abolitionists, both in Europe and at the North, not so much for the happiness and harmony of a great nation, which he has disturbed and perilled by his ignorant and wicked intermeddling with the affairs of which he knows but little, as for the new burdens which he has imposed on the slave,

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and the new obstacles which he has interposed to the gradual amelioration and improvement of his condition.

Self-protection is the primary law, and we shall stand justified, in the eyes of God and of man, in defending ourselves from unjust aggressions, though the means of safety may bring punishment and suffering where it is not most deserved.

The crime of negro-stealing has heretofore been punished by our laws with exceeding leniency, and in the very striking case to which the attention of the committee is now directed, where the offence was flagrant, and the evidence conclusive, the punishment of the guilty man was so slight as to prove that, heretofore, in punishing this crime, we have not in any degree been moved by undue resentment. Henceforward we are compelled to regard negro-stealing, by the instruments of the abolitionists, as a crime of a different character. It is no longer a mere larceny, but a species of treason against the State—a direct assault upon the very existence of our institutions. The negro-stealer, too, is now armed with new powers; he is upheld, encouraged, aided, and almost canonized by men in high places, whose commendation and sympathy inspire new vigor and fresh perseverance. The thief is taught to regard himself as an agent in the hand of Providence, and he encounters danger with the spirit of a martyr. Slight punishments will not deter him from renewed offences; for he is taught to believe that his sufferings excite the sympathies, and bring down upon his head the blessings and the prayers of the Christian world.

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In obedience, then, to the rule which requires that the punishment of an offence should be commensurate with the difficulty of preventing it, as well as its enormity, the committee feel constrained to recommend that the crime of negro-stealing, and of aiding and abetting negro-stealing, be made punishable hereafter by death. They make this recommendation not lightly, but with a deep and impressive sense of the responsibility which they assume; but they feel that the responsibility, in its heaviest extent, rests elsewhere. They believe that such a law is necessary to the safety of the country in the new aspect in which this crime must now be regarded; and if blood be the penalty which the negro-stealer has to pay for his crime, it will be upon the skirts of those whose excitements and applause have driven him to his doom.

As there is a bill now before the Senate making negro-stealing punishable with death, the committee content themselves on this head with earnestly recommending its enactment into a law.

Some of the circumstances developed in this case of Jonathan Walker have satisfied the committee that there are evil-disposed persons amongst us who permit themselves to be made channels of intercourse between the convicted felons in our prisons and their accomplices abroad, and in other ways lend their aid to the dissemination of unsound and dangerous doctrines on the subject of slavery. Towards such offenders the law should be unsparing in its penalties. To punish such of this class as are found among us with sufficient severity, and exclude those who may be officiously intruded upon us, its most solemn sanction

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should be invoked; but the committee apprehend that while we remain in a territorial government some embarrassment might arise in the enforcement of police laws adequate in their rigor to the suppression of the mischief; and as we are about to assume, under the blessing of God, the privileges and the powers of a free sovereign State, the committee recommend that this subject, together with that of new police regulations, with regard to the slaves themselves, be postponed till the meeting of the first General Assembly of the State of Florida and they earnestly invoke its serious attention to the whole subject, in all its relations and bearings.

The committee, having considered all the subjects referred to them, beg to be discharged from their further consideration.

WALKER ANDERSON,
Chairman of the Senate Committee.
I. FERGUSON, Jr.,
Chairman of the House Committee.

The reader has already seen that I have repeatedly been stigmatized with the epithet of "slave-stealer;" to which charge I did, and do still plead not guilty—although punished for that offence; neither was it ever my intention to commit it, and God forbid it ever should be.

Have not the fathers of our nation proclaimed to the world, by the declaration of independence, that "all men are born *free* and *equal?*" and that they "are endowed by their *creator*" "with an inalienable right to *life*, *liberty*, and the *pursuit of happiness?*" And

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is peaceably assisting those who have been robbed of these rights, without in any way infringing upon the rights of others, slave-stealing? Was the benevolent and humane conduct of the Samaritan, in assisting the man, who had fallen among thieves and was robbed, to get to the inn where he could be provided for, stealing? Is practising on that invaluable rule, of doing to others as we would they should do unto us under similar circumstances—enjoined upon all Christians, by JESUS CHRIST himself—slave-stealing?

As to my infringing upon any man's rights, or trespassing upon any man's property, I deny it in toto. Neither Byrd C. Willis, George Willis, nor Robert C. Caldwell had any more right to Anthony Catlet, Charles Johnson, or Silas Scott, than I or any other person had; nor did they ever have a right to those men. Under God, they had a right to themselves, which they had never forfeited; and those who claim them as property or chattels, assume authority over the ALMIGHTY CREATOR of all things.

Much has been said about invading the rights of the slave-holder, by opposing the system of slavery. As to any of the honestly gained property of the slave-holder, or any one else, I have nothing to say; but I deny that he has any right or just claim to his fellow-beings, without their forfeiture or consent, in the shape of property or chattels;—one American-born citizen being the property of another American-born citizen is ridiculous in the highest degree, and repugnant to every true republican and Christian feeling, and should never be countenanced for a moment by any one having the least idea of liberty or equal rights. All that can

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be said in favor of American slavery can be said in support of *robbery* or *piracy*.

I know that many are ready to say, they are guarantied to their holders by the laws of this government, and so are held by right. But neither this government nor these States have the right to guaranty one part of the home-born citizens to become the property of another part, nor to delegate the inherent rights and liberties of one portion to the absolute control and disposal of another portion. From whence do rights proceed? I repeat again that they never had such rights.

What the slave-holder calls his right of property in human beings, consists of the slave's wrongs; handed over from the inhuman kidnapper, who stole his human prey, and transferred it to the human flesh-buyer; and how many such flagrant wrongs does it take to make one reasonable right?

If there be a just God, to whom man is accountable, what is our hope for the perpetrators of these repeated wrongs, when they shall have passed on through life down to the oppressor's grave?

> "But what beyond that goal may be—
> What portion in eternity,
> For those who oppress to gain their wealth,
> And die without a hope in death?
> I know not—and I dare not think;
> Awhile I shudder o'er the brink
> Of that unfathomable deep,
> In which heaven's secret judgments sleep."

"Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten; your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you,

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and shall eat your flesh as it were fire."—"Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter; ye have condemned and killed the just,—and he did not resist you."

"Remember that in thy lifetime thou hast received thy good things," &c. Luke xvi. 25.

No community, society, sect, creed, or any persons or individuals, are accountable for, or chargeable with my opinions or conduct, with respect to the system of slavery,—I alone am responsible; and, as I trust, under the influence of the spirit of God. If I have erred through the weakness of human judgment, then be the offence mine, and the mercy-seat my resort for pardon. To those who charge me with having by over-zeal gone too far in aid of suffering humanity, I would say, let none other be charged with participating in what has taken place in my case—I will bear the blame alone.

Be it known to all people, that I made no bargain, contract, or agreement with any of those persons for any pecuniary remuneration for the aid and expense which I devoted to their escape from bondage, other than this: that I remarked to one or two of the men, that if they succeeded in getting where they could be free, and accumulate something for themselves, they might give me what they felt able or disposed to, in payment of the expense of their passage, as it might suit their convenience or circumstances; and when we arrived at New Providence, they would be at liberty to go where they pleased, or remain there.

I am aware that many innocent and well-disposed persons have suffered under the tongue of slander and

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calumny on my account, and that my case has been misrepresented and made a hobby-horse to ride into the anti-slavery ranks, and vilify the true philanthropists.

Since my return I have been credibly informed that some persons in my vicinity, in Massachusetts, have attempted to promulgate the belief that some of those warm-hearted friends in Harwich, who have endeavored to afford me such aid as was in their power, were interested in the transaction, and were expecting to reap some pecuniary benefit therefrom. But I wish it to be distinctly understood, that no one but myself and those who were with me in the boat, had any knowledge of the undertaking; and I never gave the hint to any other person.

Some editorials of the Barnstable (Massachusetts) Patriot have gone forth, to prejudice the people's minds against every reasonable measure calculated to aid the abolition of slavery, and to cherish a pro-slavery feeling, and a most unsocial and unchristian spirit. I lament the depravity and lack of dignity which seem to preside over the genius of its editor.

Let those who sport with the good feelings of others, and ridicule the efforts which are made to rescue the oppressed from the hands of the oppressor, remember, that they, too, are accountable for the part they act, and for the influence they attempt to disseminate. Let them not build their hopes of the decline of the anti-slavery cause upon my failing to accomplish my undertaking, in aiding a few individuals to obtain some of their rights; for I doubt not but it will eventually be the cause of awakening many sleepers to

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look upon the hideous monster, slavery, in its natural and true form; and may God grant that this nation may soon have right views and right feelings in regard to this corroding system, which is eating up its vitals, and threatening speedy distraction and destruction through the land, unless an overruling and benignant Providence should ward off the blow, and spare us from our just deserts.

It seems to have been a matter of wonder to many here at the north, to know what I expected to gain by aiding those slaves to escape from their masters. In reply, I will also ask what did the good Samaritan expect to gain by helping the man who had fallen among thieves, and was robbed and wounded, to a place of refuge and health?

In Pensacola, and in the south generally, I believe there is but one opinion in regard to my motive—that it was to aid the slaves in obtaining their freedom, because I considered it their right.

The following is the bill of costs, brought against me by the territory of Florida:—

[Copy.]

TERRITORY OF FLORIDA } *Abducting Seven Slaves.*
vs. } Verdict,
JONATHAN WALKER. } *Guilty.*

Cost of Court, and fines in seven suits, . .	$291 05
Paid Witness from Key West, ...	57 75
" do. R. C. Caldwell, . . .	3 75
" do. R. C. Caldwell, . . .	2 50
" Deputy for travelling to navy-yard, to arrest, ...	3 00
Carried forward, ...	$358 05

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Brought forward, ...	$358 05
Paid Lock for Jail, ...	0 87½
" Blacksmith, repairing Jail, &c. . .	9 13
" D. Quind, for guarding Jail, . .	87 50
" City of Pensacola for use of Jail, .	25 00
" City Jailer, for board up to May 23rd, 1845	115 50
	$596 05½

(Signed) E. Dorr,
U. S. Marshal.

Received, Pensacola, 20th May, 1845, of C. C. Keyser, Esq., Five hundred ninety-six 5-100 dollars in full for the above bill of cost.

(Signed) Eben. Dorr,
U. S. Marshal for West Florida.

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REMARKS.

"City of Pensacola, to use of Jail, $25." This to me, I confess, is rather a singular charge to bring against a prisoner.

"City marshal's bill for board," was at the rate of 37½ cents per day; but a small part of which was expended for me, as I was under the necessity of using about forty dollars, to provide myself with food, which consisted mostly of bread and molasses.

"Cost of court and fines, in seven suits, $291 05."

The fines were one hundred and sixty-five dollars, and the cost of court consisted of the district attorney's, marshal's and clerk's fees, and the evidence before the grand jury.

There were other charges in the case, and I suppose they were brought against the United States; and the whole cost and expense would have been charged to the United States, if my friends had not paid it, in order to my release.

It may not be improper to remark here that I had no witness, nor asked for any; and those whose fees are charged in the bill are—Richard Roberts, of Key West, master of the vessel that took me, near Cape Florida, and the other, Robert C. Caldwell, who claimed to be an owner of three of the slaves that left Pensacola in my boat. These were summoned by the prosecution to testify against me.

The charge for guarding the jail, $87 50, is a mooted point with me; at one time I was told that it was guarded to prevent people without from molesting me, and at another time, that it was guarded to prevent my escape from prison; but I think, probably, more to make a show than anything else.

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"Blacksmith—repairing jail, &c. $9 13."

A slave man came to jail one day, and worked on the doors about two hours, and fastened a piece of iron athwart an aperture in the door, through which I had been in the habit of receiving my food; and I do not know what the "&c." is for, except for riveting the irons on my leg, and making the *branding iron*. The lock was not used on or about the jail.

Since my return home, I have often heard the expressions used, "We never expected to see you here again;" and "How is it that they let you come so soon?" My answer is this:—Although what they term the laws of Florida could have been executed with greater severity, and I subjected to more cost and longer imprisonment, yet there was a strong abhorrence on the part of the citizens of Pensacola, generally, to any further infliction of punishment; and many were opposed to its execution thus far. During my residence in Pensacola, I had formed an acquaintance with most of the people of that place, and was on social and friendly terms with all; never having any difficulty or misunderstanding with any.

Another reason is,—that there was, as I believe I have before stated, but one opinion as to the motives which induced me to commit the act for which I was called to suffer;—all seeing that I was acting upon the principle which I believed to be true, just and right—that "God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the whole earth," and "that all men are born free and equal," and are entf-

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tled to the same rights, by the laws of God and nature All the people saw that I was not influenced by pecuniary considerations, and that I had no intention of trespass or fraud upon the rights or property of any one.

There was less indignant feeling towards me on another account. A large part of the inhabitants were Creoles, (descendants of French and Spanish parents,) and not generally so irresistibly devoted to the system of slavery as the American-born and bred citizens were; and this Creole population manifested more sympathy for me than the rest of the community did.

There has also been much inquiry of me in regard to the doings of Thomas M. Blunt, who was employed in New York to manage my defence at the November Court, in Pensacola,—or to take an appeal to the United States Supreme Court, and have the case presented there. I have not attempted to give any account of him, other than noting his visits to me at the prison in December last; feeling that his being sent was nearly the greatest insult that friends at the north could impose on me.

I was sufficiently well acquainted with the man, and his course of behavior and conduct, for seven or eight years and knew him to be void of any good principle, and pro-slavery to the back-bone; bred and practised in the hot-bed of that soul-destroying system, which is one of the greatest scourges arrayed against the well-being and happiness of man, and one of the highest insults against the authority and government of God, who has provided ample

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means for the happiness and welfare of the great human family. Thomas M. Blunt was also looked upon by the inhabitants there as a very corrupt-minded man, and a base and common swindler.

The first knowledge I had of his having anything to do with my case, was the 2nd of December last, eighteen days after I had my trial. He then called at the prison, and talked with me a few minutes through the window, without offering to come in. He stated to me that he had seen Amos B. Merrill before he left New York, and he got him to attend to my case; but in consequence of the high (!) or low (!) stage of the water in some of the rivers near there, he was prevented from being in the place in time to attend to my trial. He had then been in the place twelve or thirteen days, and said he had told people there, that he was paid two hundred dollars to manage my case, and that my friends wished to take an appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States, and wanted to know if I would consent to an appeal. I told him that I would, in case I could be bailed out, and not be subjected to illegal treatment. He said he would try to get an appeal on the case. He wanted to know what the expense amounted to; I told him that I had not yet been able to ascertain what it was. He left me, and, after a few days, called again; when I gave him a schedule of the charges then against me, which had been handed me a day or two before by the marshal, the amount of which was $421 45. I informed him that the "fine, $150," could be paid in Territorial scrip, which could be bought at a large discount, and that a sum of less than four hundred dollars would

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be sufficient to effect my release. I asked him if he could not make some arrangement to satisfy the demand, so that I might leave the place. He said that he was going to the next county, where he had some money owing him, and if he could get that, he would release me; but that he could not get an appeal on the case, for the bail would be so high that it could not be given. He handed me a paper in which was enclosed a letter, and resolution from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and left, until the 25th, when he called again, and said he was then going to New York, and would stir up my friends about the matter, and urge them to have the means necessary to my release forthcoming.

This is the substance of my positive knowledge of the doings of Thomas M. Blunt, in regard to my case; but since my return, I have been informed that he received from a committee, who had been acting in the case, seven hundred and fifty dollars, which had been subscribed to provide me with counsel, and my family with such aid as they might need.

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In writing the first edition of my narrative, under somewhat unfavorable circumstances, I seemed to pass over some things a little too briefly; and am sometimes asked, by those who have read my book, the following questions:

What became of the slaves who attempted to obtain their freedom by my assistance? and how, or in what manner, I left Florida?

Under page 15 I mentioned that they were sent from Key West to Pensacola, in the sloop Reform, and page 24, that they had arrived, and four of them were lodged in jail near me. The other three were put to their several places of labor again, without being punished. Their names were Silas and Henry Scott, (brothers,) and Moses Johnson; these were claimed by Robert C. Caldwell, an officer in the U. S. navy, as mentioned page 66. $6.25 were extorted from me in the name of the United States! and paid to him for giving testimony in court against me. [See bill, p. 99.]

Three of the four slaves that were put in prison were named Charles, Phillip and Leonard Johnson. They, and Moses, above named, were brothers, and claimed as the property of George Willis. The name of the other was Anthony Cotlett,—claimed by Byrd C. Willis. These four were kept in prison from July 28th to August 8th, when they were taken out and sent to their unpaid toil again, after having been severely punished, as mentioned page 25. George Willis was quite a large slaveholder. He had been in

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the habit of hiring many of them to the United States to work at the forts and navy-yard, for whose services he had been paid large sums by the government; and had been himself for several years employed as a United States hangman for West Florida, as mentioned page 66.

Byrd C. Willis lived in Virginia; was a relation of George Willis; and the slave claimed by him was in charge of George Willis, and shared the same fate of the others.

The manner of my discharge, and leaving Pensacola, was in substance as follows. It will be remembered, that after my last trial I was detained in prison for the want of means to pay the cost and fines, until a short time before I left; when a draft was forwarded to a merchant at Pensacola, covering the sum necessary to effect my release, from an old and true friend. The merchant, immediately on the reception of the draft, called at the prison and acquainted me with the fact; and read to me a letter of instructions to him touching my case.

As there was no opportunity of getting a passage direct to the north from that place, I was under the necessity of remaining there upwards of two weeks longer; when an opportunity offered, and I took passage on board the brig Lowellen, of Boston, for New York, where we arrived on the 10th of July. I was released from prison on the 16th of June, went immediately on board the brig, and sailed the next day. I had an opportunity to speak with but few persons of the place after I left the prison, and they all treated me with entire civility and respect.

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Soon after my return to Massachusetts, the following stirring lines appeared, from the pen of John G. Whittier, the poetical friend at Amesbury, Mass. And by special request of many, and in compliment to the author, I place them here in my book.

THE BRANDED HAND.

Welcome home again, brave seaman! with thy thoughtful brow and gray,
And the old heroic spirit of our earlier, better day—
With that front of calm endurance, on whose steady nerve, in vain
Pressed the iron of the prison, smote the fiery shafts of pain!

Is the tyrant's brand upon thee? Did the brutal cravens aim
To make God's truth thy falsehood, His holiest work thy shame?
When, all blood-quenched, from the torture the iron was withdrawn,
How laughed their evil angel, the baffled fools to scorn!

They change to wrong, the duty which God hath written out
On the great heart of humanity too legible for doubt!
They, the loathsome moral lepers, blotched from foot-sole up to crown,
Give to shame what God hath given unto honor and renown!

Why, that brand is highest honor!—than its traces never yet
Upon old armorial hatchments was a prouder blazon set;
And thy unborn generations, as they crowd our rocky strand,
Shall tell with pride the story of their father's BRANDED HAND!

As the templar, home was welcomed, bearing back from Syrian wars
The scars of Arab lances, and of Paynim scimetars,
The pallor of the prison and the shackle's crimson span,
So we meet thee, so we greet thee, truest friend of God and man!

He suffered for the ransom of the dear Redeemer's grave,
Thou for His living presence in the bound and bleeding slave;
He for a soil no longer by the feet of angels trod,
Thou for the true Shechinah, the present home of God!

For, while the jurist sitting with the slave-whip o'er him swung,
From the tortured truths of freedom the lie of slavery wrung,
And the solemn priest to Moloch, on each God-deserted shrine,
Broke the bondman's heart for bread, poured the bondman's blood for wine

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While the multitude in blindness to a far off Saviour knelt,
And spurned, the while, the temple where a present Saviour dwelt;
Thou beheld'st Him in the task-field, in the prison shadows dim,
And thy mercy to the bondman, it was mercy unto Him!

In thy lone and long night watches, sky above and wave below,
Thou did'st learn a higher wisdom than the babbling school-men know;
God's stars and silence taught thee as His angels only can,
That, the one, sole *sacred thing* beneath the cope of heaven is MAN!

That he, who treads profanely on the scrolls of law and creed,
In the depth of God's great goodness may find mercy in his need;
But woe to him who crushes the SOUL with chain and rod
And herds with lower natures the awful form of God!

Then lift that manly right hand, bold ploughman of the wave!
Its branded palm shall prophesy, "SALVATION TO THE SLAVE!"
Hold up its fire-wrought language, that whoso reads may feel
His heart swell strong within him, his sinews change to steel.

Hold it up before our sunshine, up against our Northern air—
Ho! men of Massachusetts, for the love of God look there!
Take it henceforth for your standard—like the Bruce's heart of yore,
In the dark strife closing round ye, let that hand be seen before!

And the tyrants of the slave land shall tremble at that sign,
When it points its finger Southward along the Puritan line:
Woe to the State-gorged leeches, and the church's locust band,
When they look from slavery's ramparts on the coming of that hand!

More than twenty years I have had a considerable knowledge of American Slavery, and used to think the guilt (which is without a parallel) mainly rested on the people of the slave States. But a more extended knowledge and experience has convinced me that such is not strictly the fact. When I take under consideration the existing circumstances, I am more and more compelled to believe that the people of the (so called, for in reality I know of none,) free States are mainly responsible for the present existence of American chattel slavery, and its consequences.

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It is not natural to expect that those who are born, brought up, and have always lived where slavery is recognized as laudable, and its trade respectable, and where the inhabitants have been educated from their youth to disregard the rights of others, and trample upon, and trifle with the liberties and feelings of those who have not the means or ability to contend for their rights,—it is not, I say, naturally to be expected that they will be the advocates of right. But of those who have been placed under widely different circumstances we have a right to expect a better state of feeling, and a more liberal and humane course of conduct and actions toward the destitute and the helpless victims of this country's oppression. But mortifying as it is, careful observation convinces me that such is not the case, but to a great extent it is the reverse.

If any considerable portion of the influential inhabitants of the (so-called) free states had taken sides with freedom, and used their influence and their possessed means for the removal of the abomination ten years ago, I have no doubt but by this time slavery would have been fast dwindling away, instead of deluging the country in disgraceful, exterminating wars, to enlarge its limits and power to an alarming extent. But instead of trying to check and diminish the gigantic power of the destroying monster, the church and state have combined with their physical and intellectual, their political and religious influence and power to keep down and control the long abused, oppressed, plundered and outraged objects of their oppression, and to place every possible obstacle in the way of the few unflinching friends of the slave, and their efforts to

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benefit mankind. Yes, when they can do nothing more, they resort to low, base and cowardly means; and hesitate not to vilify, slander, and use falsehood to prevent the influence of the true friends of human rights among those who would be willing to aid in the cause, and obtain correct information of the demoralizing, dehumanizing effects of the cursed system.

Surely the people have been led astray by their leaders, and it may be said, as of old, "The prophets have prophesied falsely; by their means the priests bear rule, and the people love to have it so."

The signs of the times to me indicate plainly that the time is at hand, when the iniquity of this nation and people is to be exposed in its true form, and the conflict between slavery and liberty to take place. And let me beseech the reader, in the name of GOD, RIGHT and HUMANITY, to make a right choice of his or her position—remembering that this is the most hypocritical people and nation on the face of the whole earth—professing democracy, and practising slaveocracy; professing republicanism, and practising despotism of the worst kind; professing Christianity, and practising the most dangerous infidelity.

Is it reasonable to suppose that we shall go unpunished? Had we not better heed the true proverb, that "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap?". We have for our rulers, to whom we are giving voluntary support, and with whom we have entrusted our rights and the control of this whole nation—the fornicator, the adulterer, the kidnapper, slave breeder, the slaveholder, and the human flesh trader. These are the leaders and rulers of the people,

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"and many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandize of you; whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." "Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right of the poor, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless. And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from afar? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?"

Remember, kind reader, "that GOD has no attribute that takes sides with slavery," and may you ever be found on the side of the true and the right.

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APPENDIX.

My mind has for a long time been strongly impressed with the conviction that a more than ordinary providence has attended me thus far through life. The variety of scenes and situations which I have passed through, and many a narrow escape from death, cause me greatly to wonder that I am yet a spared subject upon God's footstool; and for his great power and preserving care, attended with numerous and great mercies towards me, I delight to acknowledge him as my Governor, King, and God, to whom be glory in the highest! In view of the numerous causes that have a tendency to shorten frail man's earthly existence, I will unite with Watts in saying,

> "Strange that a harp of thousand strings
> Should keep in tune so long!".

When about fifteen years of age, one severe cold day, while sliding on the ice upon a deep pond, I incautiously went over a part that was scarcely frozen, broke through and went in, and was almost miraculously rescued by the assistance of another boy about the same age.

In the year 1817, at the age of eighteen, for twenty odd days I was stretched upon a sick couch, in a thatched bamboo* shantee, suffering with, and but scarcely surviving, a violent and raging fever, more than eight thousand miles from home, kindred and friends, among strange people and of a strange language—watched over mostly at night by lizards—innocent little creatures I never wish to forget. With what apparent earnestness and anxiety they seemed to regard me, as they crept over me and about the walls of my humble abode, by the light shining from a clay dish of cocoa-nut oil, with a string one end in the oil and the other

*Large reed that grows in the East Indies.

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on the side of the dish, lit up as a substitute for a lamp Many long, silent and wakeful hours have I observed the harmless little reptiles in their movements, while their bright and sparkling eyes surveyed me as though they felt a deep interest in my case. Their looks and actions were always pleasant and agreeable, and aided me in beguiling away the long and tedious nights.

Before I had so far recovered as to be able to prosecute any employment, my small purse was exhausted, and I was left destitute and dependent upon the kindness of those whom I never saw before, and could neither speak their language nor they mine; but a kind Providence interposed, and I was soon again in comfortable circumstances.

Less than one year from that time I was knocked down senseless and washed into the lee scuppers, on board of a ship lying to in the English channel, in a severe gale, while at the pump. A sea struck her midships with great violence, staving in much of the bulwarks and carrying with it all that was moveable, and me with the rest; and the next thing I knew, I was lying on the cabin floor, and was told, that when the water had cleared from the decks, I was found crawling out between the lanyards of the lee main rigging, and would, if let alone, in a few seconds have been overboard, and clear of the vessel.

Within a few days of one year from that time, in March, 1820, while on a passage from Europe to the United States in a brig, I was precipitated from the fore top-sail yard-arm head-foremost overboard, in a dark night and gale of wind. The weather being cold, I had on at that time heavy boots and thick clothing, which greatly obstructed my exertions in the water; and the first thing I came in contact with was the bottom of the vessel, and after some struggling to gain the surface, and before I was sensible of reaching it, I caught a rope and seized it with my whole strength, and soon found myself raised partly out of water, and the next instant plunged under again and dragged forcibly through

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it, at a rapid rate. Thus, for three or four minutes, as near as I can judge, I remained in that situation, hallooing at the top of my voice whenever my head was above water, and was nearly losing my hold when I was seized by the captain, mate, and another man, who, with some difficulty, succeeded in getting me on board.

There were two men on the same yard, and a third coming up, when I fell off, and neither knew that I had fallen off until they had reefed the topsail and come down upon deck. Had I fallen on the vessel in my headlong position, it would have insured instant death. Had I fallen in any other position than I did in the water, the concussion would, in all probability, have rendered me incapable of immediate exertion. Had I gained the surface at any other place than I did, there would have been nothing to get hold of, and in less than one minute the vessel would have passed away from me altogether and forever; for there was no possibility of getting to me with vessel or boat at such a time as that, if such an attempt should have been thought of.

I was at Havana in the sickly summer of 1824, when the yellow fever was multiplying its victims among foreigners at a fearful rate, and carrying them off with the black vomit, while death hoisted his desolating ensign over the fleet of shipping that was then in port, and sending its cart-loads daily of European and American citizens and seamen out of the city, and from on ship-board, to their last earthly abode, no more to return to the social circle and their active vocations, in which they had acted their part; but leaving gloom and despair in the countenances of many a gallant crew. In some cases there were not men enough left to pass their sleeping shipmate over the vessel's side into the waterman's boat, to be transferred to the dead-cart.

I too was singled out, and prostrated by that scourge of humanity, but after five days of severe conflict, the pale horse and his rider passed by, and permitted mercy to attend, and nature to revive again, contrary to human

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expectation; for I knew not the second one that could say that he was rescued from the clutches of the fell destroyer.

I will briefly notice one more circumstance of my life, and then would gladly have them all, with many other transactions, forever erased from my mind, were it not that I can see something in them that looks like the goodness of God in his merciful dealings with rebellious dust, and that elevates my grateful feelings to him, "for his wonderful works to the children of men."

In the fore part of the year 1835, I had some correspondence with the late Benjamin Lunday, then residing in Philadelphia. That eminent philanthropist had previously travelled and spent a considerable time in Mexico, and had obtained a grant to settle a colony in the northern part of the province of Tamaulipas, on very liberal terms, and I had a mind to favor the scheme to the best of my ability, and began to look that way for my earthly home; but thought it best to *see* the promised land before adopting it as my local resting-place with my family. In order to do so, I left New Bedford, Massachusetts, in the following November, in a vessel of twelve tons, if so small a craft may be called a vessel. Our number was three; myself and son, of the age of twelve years, and another young man, a mechanic.

We had a long and rough passage, and encountered five gales before we reached Mexico. When we arrived at Matamoras I found the country in a very unsettled state, and strong and growing prejudices were arrayed against citizens of the United States, on account of the war that was then raging between Mexico and her rebellious Texas, carried on mainly by assistance from the United States. I remained there some time expecting to be joined by others, but none appeared; they were prevented doubtless by the war.

I was chartered by mercantile houses in Matamoras to run several trips between that place and New Orleans, as a

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courier to carry letters for them on mercantile business. Returning on my last trip, we got ashore on the coast, and in the act of getting off, we were attacked by a gang of robbers. My young friend, R. Marble, attempted to escape by flight, but was pursued by two of the armed assassins, and I saw him no more. My son plunged into the surf and swam to sea. They fired at me, and I received two of their musket balls, and made supplication for mercy, but they soon convinced me, by attempting to use a pistol and their knives upon me, that if I looked to them for quarter, I looked in vain. My only chance to escape immediate death, was to follow if possible the example of my son, and while they were making the attempt to despatch me, I succeeded in gaining the surf, and joined my son in the offing. We found it necessary to divest ourselves of what clothing we had on, to enable us to exercise ourselves with more activity and ease.

And now let the reader imagine our situation. On one side was the shore guarded by the robbers ready to butcher us if we landed, and on the other side was the whole bay of Mexico; and myself deprived of the use of one hand by a bullet, being shot through the wrist joint. The blood oozing freely from that and another bullet-wound in the abdomen, was well suited to invite a greedy shark to finish the work of his two-legged brothers on shore.

From whence now could we look for aid or hope, but to God, the only sure source and fountain of hope and safety, in times of need and danger? And thither did we look, and not in vain; for, by divine assistance, we were enabled to keep our heads above water until the darkness of night afforded us an opportunity to elude their vigilance, and land at some distance from the place where we first swam. We carefully surveyed the shore, before landing, to see that we were not observed by any of the banditti, and took the direction of the shore toward the nearest inhabited place I knew of, in search of aid and protection. It was nearly

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sun-down when we were attacked, and I think we were in the water something over one hour. After travelling that night and the greater part of the next day, suffering severely from pain, raging thirst, weakness by loss of blood, and the heat of a burning sun acting upon our naked bodies,—[if memory serves, this circumstance took place on the 6th of June, 1836, in the latitude of 36° North,]—on the afternoon of the 7th, we presented our miserable and almost exhausted persons at a Rancho, (small village,) at the mouth of the Rio del Norte, where we found aid and hospitable treatment from its poor inhabitants, for which we were very grateful.

Thus we were thrown upon the charity of strangers more than two thousand miles from home, entirely naked, and pennyless, myself severely wounded and in a very delicate state of health. The distance we had travelled was estimated by the inhabitants at forty miles, and we were unable to procure any fresh water during the whole distance. I was frequently compelled to lie down, being overcome with thirst and pain. The wound in the wrist continued to bleed upwards of fifteen hours, and could only be stanched by keeping the wound higher than the shoulder, and in order to do that I was obliged to hold it up with the other hand. I am of the opinion that I lost but very little, if any, short of four quarts of blood before it stopped; and before reaching the Rancho, I was reeling and staggering like a drunken person, and could with difficulty make any progress.

The last special circumstance or transaction which I have encountered, has been related in the preceding narrative. Except the foregoing, I do not suppose that I have experienced anything more or stranger than thousands of others, who, like myself, have passed upwards of ten years of their lives on the salt blue sea, and gone among as many different nations; inhaling the atmosphere of each quarter of the globe; sometimes shivering with Russia's cold piercing winds in her ice-bound seas, and anon wilting under a

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burning vertical sun; whilst gliding through the torrid zone, gently moved along by the refreshing breeze that always blows one way; and at other times scarcely able to turn the weather-beaten face to the furious howling blasts, while my habitation majestically mounted the lofty wave which it had hove up,—the next instant rushing down its declivity with the rapidity of thought, as if bound in haste to the nether regions, almost ingulfed between two water hills; tumbling, careening, and again rearing the summit, like a thing of life. Then again all is hushed, and the troubled ocean exhibits a surface as if it was one sheet of polished glass, without a ripple, or any visible object, except now and then a homeless Mother Cary's chicken, wandering over the vast expanse of water, as if moved by instinct, regardless of its course, or where night may overtake it. Thus nature seems to have forgotten her activity, and to have fallen asleep.

But again the heavens gather blackness; the smooth, lamb-like, uniform appearance of all around, changes its aspect, and assumes the leopard's skin, and the tiger's nature. Jack's eyes brighten; he looks at the thickening cloud, then at the distant horizon; he paces the decks with hurried steps, glancing an occasional eye at the spread canvass, and begins to talk about tying it up. Old ocean's face is again about to suffer agitation, and its infant peaks begin to put on their white caps. All now is hurry and bustle; the halyards, sheets, clue-lines and gaskets, are put in requisition; the wind whistles through the rigging; the awakened craft rolls up her sea-washed side, and trembles like a frightened horse; the rumbling of the clouds' chariot-wheels is heard approaching from the upper regions; torrents of cold water descend from their beds above, and the busy mariner is immersed without consultation or consent. The forked lightnings shoot forth; and the little floating world seems to be wrapped up in a frightful thunder cloud. The bold blasphemer feels that the weapons of death are

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suspended over his head, and shunning those objects most likely to attract the liquid fire, he casts off his atheistical faith, which can only serve him in less threatening hours, when conscience is smothered and deprived of its office. But a kind Providence presides, and the heavens assume a milder hue; sail after sail is spread to catch the declining breeze; and the valiant craft speeds on towards her port of destination, regardless of the past. But in due time, the delightful sound of *Land, ho!* falls from the mast-head; joy brightens up each countenance, and imagination stands tiptoe. Soon the landward eye surveys the approaching hills, forests and fields, that produce food for men and beasts. Then comes to view a whitened pinnacle-formed edifice, fixed on some projecting point or sea-worn rock, to warn the watchful mariner of his danger when surrounded by the darkness of night. Soon new objects attract the attention; for now are seen the clustered buildings which contain a complicated multitude with their numerous avocations, with here and there a towering steeple of some public edifice established for the improvement of the physical, mental, or moral faculties of the children of men.

Some might be led to suppose that the inward-bound sailor would there find a recess from his multiplied cares and exposed situation,—a refuge from the furious contending elements; but not so; other and greater dangers and exposures are here in reserve for those who have escaped the perils incident to a sea-faring life. Not the mighty dashing billows, nor the swift rushing blasts that pack up the sea in heaps and ridges, not the lee iron-bound coasts, nor the much dreaded thunder-cloud, dealing out His chain-lightnings, are half so dangerous as the snares and gins there laid to entrap, deceive and destroy those, whose "heart is not fixed on the Lord their God," who "openeth the eyes of the blind," "who preserveth the strangers," and "giveth grace to the humble and contrite ones."

There Beelzebub has established his active agents, and

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furnished them with a recruiting robe, and instructed them to appear in numerous attractive forms; and, at every unguarded place, heave out their baits to induce the lover of pleasure and the inexperienced youth to enter and partake of their dainties,—the flowing bowl, a pack of cards, the jovial song, the merry dance, the gaming table,—and to mingle in the social circle of the house that leads to death. The end is poverty, degradation, misery, delirium and death, with awful forebodings of the future, without one cheering ray of hope beyond the grave. Of such exposures and of such vicissitudes is a sailor's life made up; and what father would like to place his boy in such a situation?—or what mother would not use all her influence to direct or induce her son to seek some other honest or useful employment, that would not cause her heart to be wrung by day and by night, at the thoughts of his exposed condition?—or to break at the knowledge of his untimely, sudden, or inglorious death, without any adequate preparation for a safe landing

"On that blest shore of endless joy,
Where troubles come no more!"

I hope the reader will not charge me with a total departure from the subject, or with designed inconsistency, if I have somewhat digressed from the main course which I have attempted to keep, and whose importance demands the ablest pens, and the first talents, and the warmest sympathies of the land, to combat the evils and expose the true causes which entail so much shame, sin, and the fruit of both, on a laudable calling. For I think that next to the slave, the sailor is thrown most shamefully into the scale of oppression, wrong, and neglect. Although some efforts have been made by many well-disposed persons for the improvement of those brave and useful sons of the main, yet nothing equal to the importance of the case has come to my knowledge. I would not be understood to overlook or

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lightly esteem the benevolent and humane efforts that have been put forth by the Seaman's Friend Society, and others favorably disposed toward the amelioration of their condition. But so long as the numerous and active schools of deception and vice are in full operation, and parents cannot, or will not, prevent their children from receiving instruction in them, we cannot or should not expect much of a reformation, or think that we have any reasonable grounds for hope of the removal of the evil.

By personal observation, I am compelled to believe that there is a great obligation and responsibility resting upon parents and guardians, ship-owners and the nation. When parents and guardians so far neglect their duty to their children and minors, as to induce them to embark on the dangerous experiment, by their neglecting to aid them in some other pursuit or employment, or drive them away by improper treatment, they have no right to complain if they have to partake of the bitter cup of sorrow and remorse themselves, as the natural fruit of their unnatural conduct towards those for whom they are, by the laws of nature and of God, held accountable. I do not intend to charge the fact upon all the parents that have children who follow the seas; neither do I contend that there is anything dishonorable or improper necessarily connected with that vocation. But I do unhesitatingly, and without the fear of contradiction, say that no way of life in the United States places a young man in so critical a situation as is common to a seafaring life; or one in which he is so likely to make shipwreck of his soul, unless guarded by the strongest moral feelings, or mercifully dealt with by a kind and overruling Providence. Especially is this true of the United States service.

I have hinted that ship-owners are the responsible party; but those who can truly plead not guilty to the charge, (and I hope and believe there are some, although the number is by far too small,) are not intended to come under it. When the owner is about to fit his ship for a voyage, he

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is perfectly aware that she must be manned, in order to perform her voyage. And does he not incur a responsibility in regard to the rights and welfare of those who have to leave home and friends, the watchful care of parents, and the restraints of civilized society, to check them from participating in those vices incident to a sailor's life, intemperance and profanity, which are the highway to numerous other vices? I would ask, if the owner has no other duty or obligation resting on him, than to furnish his vessel with such master and officers as in his opinion would be likely to perform a voyage with the least possible expense, and aid him in the accumulation of the greatest number of dollars, regardless of all pertaining to the welfare of those he employs, whether physically, mentally, or morally? Will he attempt to satisfy his conscience, and say that he has done all that he should do for them, when he has paid them their small wages, while they have undergone much privation and risked their lives for his benefit?

The owner, if he chooses, can place his ship, without making any sacrifice or incurring any risk, in charge of masters and officers who are of temperate habits and humane hearts; such as can control themselves, and not allow their own passions and outbreaks of improper conduct and language to disgrace them in the eyes of the crew, and excite them to disobedience, anger and rebellion. Self-control is no small part of the qualification of a master or officer; and by judicious authority, and a reasonable course of correct conduct towards the crew, he will insure respect and ready obedience on the part of the crew, and bind the cords of friendship and good-will stronger, and excite to a faithful discharge of their duty, more than by all the curses, threats, blasphemy, blows, floggings and pistols that could be displayed on a ship's deck.

Seamen, as well as other people, are in some measure creatures of circumstances, and partake much of the customs and spirit of those whom they have constant inter-

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course and business with. If the master and officers do not indulge in improper language and conduct themselves, they have a right, and it is their duty, to insist on the same from the crew, and I doubt not but they would generally be met by a response on the part of the crew. "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."

Another point worthy of serious consideration, and for which, owners should be entitled to the censure of every sailor's friend, is the careless manner in which they ship, or have their crews shipped; which frequently causes much and serious damage and difficulty on the voyage. It is very common for sailors to go or be carried on board of vessels, ignorant of the purport of the articles of agreement which they have signed or others have signed for them; for their consent is too often given, and their signatures are affixed, while under the influence of intoxicating liquors, or instigated by other improper agents, and soon after they find cause to regret it, without the ability to retract the unguarded transaction.

There is nothing more common than for sailors to be sadly deficient in a knowledge of the law by which they are governed, and for the violation of which, they frequently have to suffer severely. Many serious occurrences and difficulties have passed under my own observation, both at sea and in port, in consequence of their ignorance of the purport of the articles of agreement, and the law by which they are bound and by which they are to be governed; and this, consequently, is the means of constantly furnishing jails and prisons with inmates, and courts with employment; which attempted remedy often proves worse than the disease.

How much would it cost to furnish each outward-bound vessel with a copy of so much of the maritime law as relates to their obligation and duty, so that each man could

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know for himself his limits, and shape his course of conduct and actions accordingly!

It is not my intention to go into a minute investigation, or notice this subject here at any length; but a sense of duty to that class of citizens, for whose welfare I feel very solicitous, and for whose wrongs much abhorrence, induces me to say thus much.

The cabin and quarter deck are frequently lit up by instruction, conversation and reading; but darkness and silence generally hang over the forecastle and main deck, except it is broken by notice of some misdemeanor on Jack's part. Then, if he speaks, or attempts to defend himself or his shipmates from violent abuse or blows from an intemperate, overbearing, foul-mouthed captain, he is charged with mutiny, and hove into a distant prison, destitute and despised, to await the pleasure of the assaulting party, and to undergo a mock trial, with overwhelming prejudices and power arrayed against him. While I am writing this, a part of the crews of two brigs are now incarcerated with me, as I have intimated, without any adequate means for their defence.

This nation has incurred disgrace abroad, and shame and guilt at home, by the course she has pursued in the instruction of her sons in the arts of vice and immorality, by her schools of sin and degradation.

It is a notorious fact, that a large portion of those who serve on board of a man-of-war, leave that service in a far worse condition than when they joined it, if they leave it alive. How can it be otherwise, when a young man is confined for years in a crowd that make the most liberal use of the most licentious, blackguard and profane language that can be spoken; and receiving with his daily rations the bewitching, destructive and poisonous draught, which stimulates and excites the worst passions, and inflames the mind, while learning the art of killing his fellow-men to gratify a few avaricious, self-willed, cruel monsters in human

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shape, who neither fear God nor regard the welfare of men! And if these lessons do not sufficiently destroy all the best feelings and dignity of the man, then take him to the gangway and give him two or three dozen, in view of all his associates, on the bare back, with the cat-o'-nine-tails, as the reward of some misconduct that he has just been trained to. He is then qualified to be anything that a man should not be, and to participate in the most degrading vice that can fall in his way. He is then rigged out with his life diploma; stamped with indelible stripes across his back, only to be obliterated when death shall remove him from his degraded earthly tabernacle!

I again repeat, that if this drilling and fostering in the cradle of vice and immorality do not sufficiently debase and ruin the poor victim, it will not be for the want of national support and countenance.

In the few passing remarks I have here made, I intend no disrespect to seamen generally, though I very much regret to say they yield too readily to their own downfall and ruin; yet I am proud and prepared to say, that of all classes of men, none possess more open or greater hearts than do the sailors; or are so ready to run any risk or make any sacrifice in aid of their suffering fellow-beings. To such I am indebted, more than others, for their active and manifest sympathies toward me when in prison and in chains. They did not, as did some others, call to see what kind of a looking animal an abolitionist was; but to see in what way they could contribute to my comfort, or ameliorate my condition; and their purses were tendered me cheerfully, although some were entire strangers. Sailors generally, if they have not been spoiled by unreasonable and inhuman treatment, by brutal blows and cursing, can be managed under almost all circumstances without difficulty. They are the most sensible of favors of any people that I have ever had the privilege to be among; and though their appearance and manner is rough, and in many respects different from others,

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yet they are susceptible of the finest feelings, and possess warm hearts. Those who have read the circumstances attending the fate of the ship Dorchester on her passage from Liverpool to the United States last December, have in that transaction seen an example of their fortitude, heroism and resignation, in the magnanimity of her brave captain and crew toward each other and their passengers in their helpless and perilous situation.

I do not intend to say that it is a universal thing for owners to pay no attention to the moral qualifications of their captains, or that, whenever difficulties occur on ship-board, it is always the fault of the masters or officers. But I do intend to be distinctly understood to say, that owners generally, are guilty of great neglect in the selection and instruction of their masters, and in their duty to their seamen; and that the masters or officers do, either by improper conduct, language, or neglect of proper pacific means, excite or permit the excitement of a large proportion of the difficulties which occur on shipboard. Neither do I take sides with the sailor because he is a sailor, nor the slave because he is a black man, but because they are the injured and oppressed party. For "on the side of the oppressor there is power;" "the spoil of the poor is in their houses."

Since writing the foregoing, I have run afoul of a neat little book entitled, "Thirty-two Years from Home, or a Voice from the Main Deck," which I recommend to the careful perusal of all parents before sending their children to sea, and to all persons that are interested either in seafaring business, or the welfare of seafaring people, particularly that of the navy.

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